



# THE LIBERTY "76" BOYS OF '76

A Weekly Magazine containing Stories of the American Revolution.

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## THE LIBERTY BOYS' HOT CAMPAIGN; OR, THE WARMEST WORK ON RECORD.

By HARRY MOORE



While some of the Liberty Boys kept the raft as near the middle of the stream as possible, others fired at the Indians along-shore. The Indians returned the fire, with arrows. The heat from the burning timber was almost unbearable.

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## The Liberty Boys' Hot Campaign

OR,

### The Warmest Work on Record.

By **HARRY MOORE.**

#### CHAPTER I.

##### A DESPERATE CASE.

It was a beautiful afternoon in May, of the year 1779.

Along a road which wound and twisted through the timber perhaps fifteen miles north from Savannah rode a handsome, bronzed youth about nineteen years of age.

The youth in question was mounted on a magnificent coal-black horse, which evidently had Arabian blood in its veins.

The youth was one who had made himself famous in the North by his wonderful work as a scout and spy.

He was known as Dick Slater, the captain of the Liberty Boys of '76.

Dick and the Liberty Boys had been sent down into the South to aid the patriots there and to render assistance to General Lincoln, who was in command of the patriot army of the South, with headquarters at Charleston, South Carolina.

Dick and the Liberty Boys were not content to remain quietly in Charleston and await developments, however; they wished to be up and doing; they could not keep still.

So they had left Charleston and had penetrated into Georgia.

On this day of which we write, Dick had ridden on ahead in disguise and the other members of the company of Liberty Boys were coming along at a leisurely pace several miles behind.

Their purpose in coming down in this part of the country was to protect the patriot settlers from the foraging bands of redecoats that came forth from Savannah to rob and plunder.

Suddenly an exclamation escaped Dick's lips.

"Hello! That is rather an unequal combat, I must say!" were the words that escaped his lips.

Fifty yards in advance of him a very peculiar combat was in progress.

It was between an Indian and a big black bear.

The Indian was making as good a fight as he could; his only weapon was a scalping-knife.

The bear had seized the redskin in his paws and was hugging him in a manner that was taking the strength from the Indian quite rapidly.

A moment after Dick came in sight of the scene the bear crushed the Indian to the ground, and in a few more minutes it would have all been over, for the redskin was almost exhausted; but Dick arrived and took a hand in the affair.

Leaping to the ground, he drew a pistol and ran up close to the bear; placing the muzzle of the pistol against its head, he pulled the trigger.

Crack!

The shot was a deadly one.

The bear gave utterance to a gasping growl and tumbled over on the ground and began struggling in its death agonies.

The Indian scrambled to his feet and stood panting in front of Dick.

"Red Fox much 'blige," he said in very fair English; "white boy save Injun's life."

"Oh, I don't know about that," said Dick; "you might have succeeded in killing the brute."

The Indian shook his head.

"No think so," he said. "Injun 'bout tired out."

"Well, I'm glad that I happened along just in time to be of service to you."

"Injun glad, too. Red Fox no furgit."

"Oh, that's all right; I did no more than you would have done for me."

A peculiar look appeared on the redskin's face and he looked at Dick for a few moments in silence.

"Dunno 'bout that," with a sober shake of the head;

"Injun's people no like white men."

"Is that so?"

"Ugh. They kill white people whenever they git chance."

"Is that so?"

"Ugh."

"That is bad. What tribe do you belong to?"

"Cherokee."

"Ah! And are the Cherokees on the war path?"

"Ugh. They on war path most all time, an' now they are helpin' white men with red coats on."

Dick started.

"You mean the British?" he asked.

"Ugh. That um."

"In that case, perhaps I should have let the bear eat you, Red Fox," said Dick.

"What fur?"

"Because, if you are helping the redcoats you must be my enemy."

A look of understanding appeared in the beady eyes of the Indian.

"Me know," he said; "you one of the people what redcoats call rebels."

"That's right, Red Fox; now what are we to do—fight each other?"

The Indian glanced down at the still form of the dead bear and then shook his head.

Then he folded his arms and looked straight into Dick's eyes.

"Red Fox no fight white boy who save um life," he said, with grave dignity; "if white boy want fight Injun he can do so; Injun no do ennythin'."

Dick smiled and a look of satisfaction came over his face.

"Then we are to be friends, Red Fox?" he asked.

"Ugh. Red Fox white boy's frien'."

"Good!"

Dick extended his hand and the Indian grasped it. They were to be friends.

"White boy a rebel?" the Indian asked.

"Yes; I told you so a little while ago, you know."

"Ugh. Well, Red Fox him rebel, too."

"Good for you!" exclaimed Dick; "then we will be friends, indeed!"

"Injun help white boy all him can."

"Glad to have you help me, Red Fox."

The Indian looked thoughtfully at the ground for a few moments and then said:

"Red Fox want t' do sumthin' fur white boy t' pay um fur savin' Injun's life."

"That is all right. You need do nothing, Red Fox."

"But Injun will do sumthin'. Could white boy use yelow stuff what white peeples use so much?—Red Fox mean gold."

Dick started.

"Gold!" he exclaimed.

"Ugh. Injun know where fin' lots of gold."

"Where?" asked Dick, eagerly.

"Way up river, in 'mong hills."

"How do you know there is gold there?"

"Injun have foun' it, lots times."

"Is there much of it, Red Fox?"

"Ugh. Heap lots."

"How far away is this place where the gold is to be found?"

"Two days frum here."

Dick was silent and thoughtful a few moments and then said:

"We could make use of the gold, Red Fox, and perhaps we may go and get some of it later on; but at the present time I have some other work to attend to. I must look after the redcoats."

"Red Fox help you."

"All right; can you tell me if there are any redcoats in this vicinity at the present moment?"

"Red Fox don't know; we go and look."

"Very well; come along."

Dick mounted his horse and rode onward, while the redskin trotted along beside him.

They made their way along for at least two hours, and then of a sudden they found themselves surrounded by a score or more of Indian warriors, who rushed out from among the trees.

"Don' be 'fraid," said Red Fox; "these my peeples."

Then he said something to the warriors in the Indian tongue.

They listened with interest, and then replaced the arrows in the holders and showed by signs that they were friendly.

"I told um you save my life," explained Red Fox; "an' you can go your way now if you want. Red Fox no go enny funder, but when you want t' see me, come t' place where you kill bear, just 'fore sundown. I be there ev'ry day."

"Very well," said Dick, "and much obliged, Red Fox; I may take a notion that I will want to go and get some of that gold, and will want you to guide me."

"Ugh. Red Fox be ready."

Then Dick rode onward.

Three-quarters of an hour later he brought Major to a stop on the top of a hill, and away in the distance he saw the city of Savannah.

While he sat there looking down the road he saw a couple of riders come in sight a mile away. They were coming along at a gallop, and would soon be at the top of the hill.

Dick acted upon the impulse of the moment, and dismounted and led his horse back in among the trees and tied him.

Then he walked back and took up his position behind a tree near the road.

He did not have long to wait.

The riders appeared a few minutes after; and, to Dick's surprise, one was a horsewoman.

The man was a British officer, a captain, judging by his uniform. The woman was young and very pretty, so Dick thought.

Quite to the youth's surprise, the two brought their horses to a stop and made them turn around.

The two gazed in the direction of Savannah for a few moments, and then the young woman exclaimed:

"What a beautiful view we get from here, Captain Fairfax!"

"Very beautiful, Miss Gertrude," was the reply.

The captain, Dick noted, was looking, not at the scenery, but at the young woman, and Dick at once decided that the officer was in love with his fair companion.

She glanced around and saw that the captain's eyes were fastened on her face, and she burst out into a fit of silvery laughter.

"Were you looking at me when you said that, Captain Fairfax?" she asked.

He bowed in a grave, dignified manner, and said:

"I was."

Again the young lady laughed.

"Oh, Captain, Captain! When will you learn to be sensible?" she exclaimed.

"I can't help loving you, Gertrude!" said the officer, in almost a hissing voice, and he bent almost a fierce look upon the girl's face.

"Oh, but you must help it," was the reply; "I have told you a number of times that your love is not reciprocated, and so the best thing you can do is to force yourself to forget about it."

"I cannot and I will not!" was the fierce reply; "I love you, and I am going to marry you!—or, if I do not, nobody else shall!"

The young woman stared at the speaker in wonder for a few moments, and then exclaimed:

"Why, Captain Fairfax!"

"I meant it!" was the savage reply.

"That is no way to talk, sir!"

"I can't help that; there is no use of my hiding my feelings longer."

"Well, you are honest, at any rate; but I don't like to hear you talk in that strain, and if you do so again I shall report the matter to my father."

A sneer appeared on the captain's face.

"I won't say anything more," he said.

"I am glad to hear you say that. It may save you some trouble."

The officer looked at the young woman in such a peculiar manner that it attracted Dick's attention.

"I wonder what he is thinking about now?" the youth asked himself.

He was not long to remain in ignorance of the officer's thoughts, for suddenly the captain said, slowly and deliberately, but with undoubted earnestness:

"Gertrude, life without you would be torture, would be unendurable, and since you refuse to accept me as a suitor—since you tell me, indeed, that there is no hope for me, I have become desperate, and I have sworn that I will possess you whether you consent or not."

The young woman gazed at the speaker, a look of surprise, anger and horror commingled resting on her countenance.

"Captain Fairfax!" she exclaimed.

"I mean it!" he declared; "and I think that the time has come for me to act."

"What are you going to do?" fear in the tones.

"I am going to get away from this part of the country, and—I am going to take you with me!"

"Do you mean that you are going to desert from the British army?"

"Yes."

"Coward!"

The girl's voice rang out loud and clear.

"Traitor!"

The captain's face flushed, but he was evidently not to be turned from his purpose, for he said, with forced calmness:

"Will you go with me, Gertrude, peaceably, or will I have to make a prisoner of you?"

"I will not go with you at all!" cried the girl, and she gave her horse a cut with a riding-whip and caused it to leap forward quickly.

Not quickly enough, however. Captain Fairfax seemed to have been looking for some such move, for he reached forward and grabbed the bridle-rein and jerked the horse back upon its haunches nearly unseating the fair rider.

"Oh, you scoundrel!" cried the girl, and she gave the captain a cut across the face with the riding-whip.

The officer gave utterance to an exclamation of rage, and jerked the whip out of the young woman's hand and threw it away.

"You will pay for that blow, Gertrude Amesly!" he hissed, his face dark with rage, save where a red welt showed across it.

"And so shall you pay for the treatment you have been according the young lady, you cowardly scoundrel!" cried a clear, ringing voice, and a man mounted on a large, white horse rode out from among the trees at the opposite side from where Dick Slater was concealed and confronted the captain.

## CHAPTER II.

### A BRAVE MAN TO THE RESCUE.

The newcomer was a man about twenty-five years of age, and he was a magnificent specimen of physical manhood.

He was at least six feet tall, Dick judged, and was built in proportion.

He was a handsome fellow, too, and there was an air of command about him that would scarcely have been expected from one who was dressed as roughly as was the case with him, for he wore the simple, backwoods costume of the time and region.

Dick had been on the point of rushing forth and calling the British officer to account for the manner in which he was conducting himself; but the stranger had forestalled him, and so he remained in concealment and watched the scene with interest, eager to see what would happen.

"If I mistake not, the worthy captain will find that he has caught a Tartar," thought Dick; "the only trouble is that the stranger may not be armed and may lose his life."

With the coming of this thought, Dick drew and cocked a pistol.

"I will see to it that the captain does not shoot the stranger down without giving him a chance," said the Liberty Boy to himself, grimly.

Captain Fairfax and Gertrude Amesly were surprised by the sudden appearance of the stranger, and the young lady uttered an exclamation of joy.

"Oh, I am so glad that someone has come!" she cried; "now your plans will be disarranged, Captain Fairfax!"

"Who are you calling a scoundrel, you peasant dog!" cried the British officer, fiercely.

"You!" was the prompt retort.

"I'll have your life for that!" hissed the captain.

"You are welcome to it if you can take it," was the cool reply.

"Leave here instantly!" cried the British officer.

"I shall do nothing of the kind; remember, I am here to protect this lady, and I intend to do so."

"She needs no protection."

"Judging by what I heard you say, I refuse to believe that statement."

"Which is the same as saying I lie!" hissed the captain.

"Have it so if you like."

"A growl escaped the lips of the officer, and he pointed down the road.

"I will give you one more chance," he said; "go and I will spare your life."

"Thank you for nothing," was the scornful reply; "my life is in no danger."

Gertrude gave the stranger a smile and nodded her head approvingly.

"You are as brave as you are noble-hearted and chivalrous," she said.

This action on Gertrude's part and her words rendered the officer wild with rage, and he drew his sword and spurred his horse toward that of the stranger.

"I'll split you from head to waistline, you peasant dog!" he cried.

But he was given a surprise; he was not to succeed so easily.

Just as Gertrude uttered a scream—she thought the

stranger was to lose his life—and just as Dick leveled his pistol to fire, the stranger drew a sword, which up till then had escaped the notice of the other actors in the drama, and then he engaged the British officer in combat.

"Ha! you have a sword, eh?" cried Captain Fairfax. "Well, so much the better. I will not have to cut you down without giving you any chance."

"You won't cut me down at all," was the cool reply.

Gertrude Amesly watched the combat with breathless interest, her eyes sparkling, her face pale, and Dick was almost as greatly interested, for the fact that the stranger had a sword was as great a surprise to him as it had been to the girl.

Captain Fairfax pressed the combat, for he thought that he would have an easy time disposing of the "peasant dog," as he had termed his opponent; but he was not long in learning that the other knew something about the use of the sword. Indeed, the realization was forced upon him that his opponent was as good a swordsman as he.

Dick, who was an expert swordsman himself, was quick to see that the British officer had met his match.

"I'm glad of it," he thought; "the captain is a scoundrel, and deserves to be given the worst of it."

The British officer was very angry when he found that he could not gain any advantage over his antagonist, and he said, in a scornful voice:

"Be careful, or you may cut yourself with that sword, you peasant dog!"

The other laughed scornfully, and replied:

"Don't worry, you redcoat dog. I am in no danger from my own blade—nor from yours, either."

This made the captain more wrathful than ever, and he made a fierce attack, striving his hardest to beat down the other's guard.

It availed him nothing, however; he could not do it.

The stranger was wonderfully strong, and was fully as good a swordsman as the other, and so he held his own without much difficulty.

The captain, on the other hand, was not in trim for a long, hard combat, and he was rapidly getting winded.

He was panting as a result of his exertions.

He was growing weaker, too, and he could not wield his sword as rapidly and energetically as at first.

This was evident to Dick, and the captain's opponent saw it also, for he said:

"Do you want to stop and rest awhile, Captain?"

An exclamation of anger escaped the officer's lips.

"I am not tired," he said.

"Oh, yes you are; it is easy to see that such is the case."

"Bah! It is false!"

"It is true, and now I am going to take the offensive."

"You will do well to keep on trying to defend yourself."

"Thanks for the advice. But you will now have to try acting on the defensive."

Then the stranger began making a fierce attack.

He quickly proved that he was an expert with the sword,

and in a very few moments he had the captain in difficulties.

The officer did his best and put up as good a defense as he could, but his strength was pretty well gone, and he soon realized that he would be overcome and perhaps cut down in a few minutes.

He fought on desperately, however; he would not give up and cry for quarter. He was not as brave as some men, perhaps, but he was too proud to do this in the presence of the woman whom he loved.

So he kept on defending himself, until presently the stranger gave the sword a resounding stroke, knocking it out of his hands and sending it flying into the grass by the roadside.

Then a sudden terror seized hold of the officer.

He was a coward after all, and could not face the death which he thought was threatening him.

He gave utterance to a yell of terror, and put spurs to his horse and went dashing down the road in the direction of Savannah. He did not look behind him, and so great was his excitement and terror, that he lost his hat and rode onward bareheaded.

"Come back!" called out the victor; "come back and get your sword. I won't hurt you."

The last four words must have been galling to the captain, but he did not let on that he had heard; he kept on going at the top of his horse's speed.

"Oh, sir, I thank you ever so much!" said the girl, and she held out her hand impulsively.

The stranger had sheathed the sword, and now he doffed his hat and, taking the hand in his, bowed over it, at the same time saying, gallantly:

"No thanks are necessary, lady; it was a pleasure to interfere in your behalf. If anything, I am your debtor."

The look which the stranger bent upon the young woman as he said this was so full of honest admiration that Gertrude blushed in spite of herself.

"Such a brave man should not deal in flattery," she said, to hide her confusion.

"It is not flattery, but the truth that I am dealing in," was the earnest reply.

They talked a few minutes, and then the girl asked the young man what his name was.

"Arthur Welby," was the reply. "And may I ask your name, Miss?"

"My name is Gertrude Amesly; I am the daughter of Colonel Amesly, of the British army."

"Your father is stationed at Savannah?"

"Yes, sir."

Arthur Welby looked down the road in the direction taken by the fleeing British officer, and said:

"I wonder if the gallant captain will come back to escort you to the city?"

"If he should do so I would not accompany him," said the girl, spiritedly; "and I do not think he will dare return to Savannah, anyway," she added, "after the declaration he

made of his intention of deserting the army and carrying me away a prisoner."

"True; I had forgotten about that. Well, I am at your service. I shall be only too glad to act as your escort, Miss Amesly."

"Thank you, Mr. Welby; I shall be glad to accept of your company."

They were about to ride back in the direction of Savannah, when around a bend in the road a quarter of a mile away came six horsemen. The two looked at the party, and recognized one of the members as being Captain Fairfax. The others were British troopers.

"Hello, what does that mean?" exclaimed Arthur Welby.

"Danger to you, I fear!" exclaimed Miss Amesly; "the captain has told them some falsehoods, and they will attack you before I can get a chance to make an explanation."

Welby drew his sword and a pistol, and said grimly:

"Let them come; I will fight the six!"

"Oh, you will be killed! Fly! Fly for your life!"

•But Welby shook his head. He was not the fellow to run, with only six against him. Then, too, he feared that the five who were with the captain might be cronies, and that they would aid the officer in his plan of carrying the young woman off.

Captain Fairfax had met the five troopers half a mile down the road, and had told them a party of half a dozen rebels had set upon him, and that after a hard fight he had managed to escape, but that Miss Amesly was a prisoner; he asked the troopers to aid him in rescuing the young woman.

Of course they believed him, and were eager to get at the rebels.

Around the bend they rode, and when they saw that there was only one man with the colonel's daughter, one of the troopers said:

"Where are the rest of the rebels, Captain?"

"I don't know; that fellow is their leader, and if we can kill him we will be doing good work. Shoot him down without mercy!"

Forward they dashed, and as they drew near, drew their pistols and got ready to open fire.

Miss Amesly suddenly urged her horse forward till it was in front of the one Welby was mounted on, and, waving her hand, cried out:

"Wait! Don't shoot! He is a friend!"

But the captain drowned her last words by yelling out the command.

"Fire, men, the instant you are in range."

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CAPTAIN'S DISCOMFITURE.

"Out of the way, Miss Amesly!" cried Welby; "those fools may shoot, and they might kill you!"

The girl made no move to obey, however; it was evident that she would do all she could to protect the man who had protected her.

As may well be supposed, Dick Slater had been an interested spectator of the scene from beginning to ending, and his sympathies were with the young man, Arthur Welby, as a matter of course.

The instant he saw the six British troopers coming he realized that there was going to be an encounter between them and Welby, and he made up his mind that he would take a hand in it.

He drew his pistols and ran down toward the advancing redcoats.

Just after Captain Fairfax yelled out the command to fire as soon as they were in range, Dick leveled his pistols and fired two shots.

He was as good a shot with the left hand as with the right, and he dropped two of the redcoats out of the saddles.

This came as a surprise, and a very unpleasant one at that, to the troopers. They had not reckoned on having to contend with anyone other than the man with Miss Amesly.

The fall of the two troopers shocked the others so severely that they brought their horses to a stop as quickly as possible.

This was Arthur Welby's opportunity.

He rode around from behind Miss Amesly's horse and dashed toward the four troopers.

He fired the pistol that was in his left hand, and one of the troopers reeled and almost fell out of the saddle.

Then the daring young man gave utterance to a yell of defiance and dashed onward toward the other three, waving his sword.

By this time Dick had replaced the two discharged pistols in his belt and had drawn two more.

These he cocked and leveled, and, taking quick aim, he fired.

Crack! Crack!

One of the three unwounded redcoats reeled and almost fell.

This was too much for them, and the troopers brought their horses around and hastened to get them started back in the other direction.

Arthur Welby followed a short distance, but found he was not gaining, so stopped and returned to where Miss Amesly was seated on the back of her horse, watching the flight of the redcoats. And, to tell the truth, she seemed pleased by the way the affair had terminated, daughter of a British colonel though she was.

The young man brought his horse to a stop and doffed his hat to the young lady.

"I am sorry, Miss Amesly, that the British soldiers made it necessary for myself and my unknown friend to handle them so roughly; we are not to blame."

"I know that, Mr. Welby, and do not blame you in the

least." Then she looked in the direction from which the four pistol-shots had sounded, and added:

"I wonder who the friend is?"

Welby looked in the same direction, and called out:

"Come forth, friend."

Dick stepped out from behind a tree and advanced.

The two looked at him with interest. And as he drew near enough so that they could get a good look at him they said to themselves that he was a fine-looking young fellow.

Dick doffed his hat and bowed when he was close to the two, and said:

"Good-afternoon."

The young woman bowed and smiled, and Welby leaped down from his horse and extended his hand.

"Good-afternoon," he said; "and permit me to thank you for the assistance which you gave me a few minutes ago. I assure you that I appreciate it; doubtless I would have fared badly at the hands of the troopers but for it."

"Well, odds of six to one is rather more than one likes to encounter, as a rule, that is true."

"Yes, indeed."

"You are entirely welcome to all the assistance that I gave you; I was glad to be able to help you."

Then Miss Amesly started to explain to Dick how the affair came to take place, so far as Captain Fairfax's part of it was concerned, but he smiled and told her that he had been concealed near at hand and had heard the whole conversation between her and the captain.

"I know just what a scoundrel he is," said Dick; "I am only sorry that he was not one of the two who fell yonder," and he pointed to where the two troopers lay.

"So am I," was the reply; "but the scoundrels are usually the ones to escape and the innocent suffer."

"Yes, the two troopers were no doubt deceived by the captain, who probably told them that he had been set upon by rebels and that you had been kidnapped."

"Likely enough, sir."

Then Arthur Welby asked Dick his name, and the youth gave a fictitious one. He feared that when Miss Amesly went to Savannah and told about the affair there might be some there who would recognize his real name. And he did not want that his presence in this part of the country should be known.

The three talked awhile, and then Miss Amesly said she must be going back to Savannah.

"Father will be anxious regarding my safety if I am away too long," she said.

"I will act as your escort whenever you wish to start, Miss Amesly," said Arthur Welby.

"I wish to go at once, but I am afraid that you may get into trouble, Mr. Welby. Captain Fairfax and the troopers may stop and might waylay us and shoot you down."

"I will risk it."

"I will accompany you," said Dick; "I have a horse near by."

"It is not necessary," said Welby; "I am not afraid of the troopers."

"I know that, but they might kill you, nevertheless. So I will go along with you."

This seemed to meet with the approval of Miss Amesly, and so Dick brought forth his horse, mounted, and the three set out down the road.

Miss Amesly averted her face and shuddered as they passed the silent forms of the two dead troopers.

"We will bury them when we return," said Dick to Welby.

The others nodded.

The three rode onward at a gallop.

They kept a sharp lookout for the troopers, but saw nothing of them.

When they were within a mile of the edge of the city of Savannah the young woman brought her horse to a stop and said to Dick and Welby:

"There is no need of your going farther; it is only a little way to the city, and I will be safe in going alone."

"Very well," said Dick; "we will go back."

Then the two young men bade her goodbye, and Dick, who was an observant youth, noted that there was heightened color in the young woman's face as she shook hands with Arthur Welby.

"I wish that I could invite you both to call on me at my home in the city," the girl said; "but since you have had an encounter with some of the king's troopers it would be dangerous for you to come."

"Certainly; we understand that," said Dick.

"Yes, and thank you the same as though we were in a position to accept of your invitation," said Welby.

"Do—do you live—near here?" the girl asked, looking inquiringly at Welby. She had spoken hesitatingly, and the color came into her cheeks again as her eyes rested on the young man's face.

"I live within a mile of the spot where you were when I put in an appearance and interfered with the captain," was the reply.

This, Dick noted, seemed to please the young woman. He noted also that she did not ask him if he lived in the vicinity.

"I believe she has taken a fancy to him," the youth told himself; "and if I am any judge, he has fallen in love with her. Well, I don't blame him, for she is a very beautiful young woman, and is evidently as sensible as she is beautiful."

After some further conversation the two bade the young woman good-afternoon and turned and rode back in the direction from which they had come, Miss Amesly riding onward toward Savannah.

She was thinking of the adventure of the afternoon, and as she thought of the dastardly manner in which Captain Fairfax had acted, her eyes flashed with anger.

Then she set her lips together and said to herself that her father would know of the captain's action as soon as she got home.

"He will send a party out to hunt Captain Fairfax down and capture him," the girl told herself. "And I hope that they will capture him—the scoundrel!"

Miss Amesly had plenty of spirit, and was not disposed to overlook the action of the captain.

Then she thought of the handsome young man who had come to her aid and who had defeated the captain in the sword duel, and her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled.

"Oh, but he is a brave and noble-hearted man!" she said to herself; "he is my idea of a true man, and—and——" The girl hesitated, and then after a little while she went on to herself: "I wonder if I love him!"

She did, but she did not fully realize it as yet, though that she suspected it is evident.

She rode on into the city and went at once to the house where her father had taken up his quarters. It was the home of a patriot who had fled when the British appeared in Savannah.

The colonel was a widower and Gertrude was an only child; he loved her as the apple of his eye, and when she dismounted, turned her horse over to a servant and entered and told her father about the action of the captain, the colonel was very angry.

"The cowardly scoundrel!" the colonel exclaimed; "so he was going to carry you away and try to force you to marry him, was he? Well, we will see about this matter. I will send out two or three parties to search for him, and when he is captured we will have a hanging-bee here in Savannah!"

"And serve him right, father; for he deceived five of your troopers and caused them to help him, with the result that two lost their lives at the hands of the strangers who came to my aid, and two more were wounded."

"So you told me before. Well, I will attend to this matter at once."

He summoned his orderly, and told him to send a certain captain there at once. The orderly bowed and withdrew.

"Why did you not bring the two strangers here?" the colonel asked; "I would have liked to have thanked them for what they did for you."

"Well, you see, father, they had killed two of your troopers and wounded two more, and I was afraid that they might be seized and made prisoners if they entered the city, and I did not want that to happen after they had been so kind to me and had helped me."

"I could have prevented any harm from coming to them, but perhaps it was as well that they did not come."

"Likely you are right, father."

A few minutes later a captain put in an appearance, and the colonel explained what he wanted done. He told about Captain Fairfax, and how he had played the traitor and dastard at the same time, and ordered that three parties be made up, and that they go in search of the fugitive officer.

"Capture him if possible," said the colonel; "I want to see the villain hanging at the end of a rope as soon as possible."

"I will do the best I can, sir," said the captain; "your orders shall be obeyed."

Then he saluted and took his departure.

He went to his quarters and soon had organized three parties, as directed by the colonel, and an hour later they were riding out of the city.

"I hope that they will capture that scoundrel!" said the colonel, after the captain had taken his departure.

"So do I, father," replied Gertrude; "but—you won't hang him, will you?"

"Perhaps not," was the reply; "but he will be shot, as the traitor deserves to be!"

"It seems pretty hard, father," said Gertrude, with a shudder, "but he certainly does deserve death if any man ever did."

## CHAPTER IV.

### IN SAVANNAH.

As Dick and Arthur Welby rode back up the road they proceeded to get better acquainted.

They had taken quite a liking to each other for such short acquaintance.

"I believe you said that you live not far from the place where the encounter with the redcoats took place?" remarked Dick.

"Yes," was the reply.

"And am I right in supposing that you are a patriot?"

"I am a patriot, yes."

"I am glad to hear that. I can talk to you freely, now that I know this."

"You are a patriot, then?"

"I am; have you ever heard of the Liberty Boys of Seventy-six?"

Arthur Welby nodded, and a look of interest appeared in his eyes.

"Yes, I have heard of them," he said.

"Well, I am the captain of the company of youths known by that name."

"Then your name is——"

"Dick Slater."

"I have heard of you, Captain Slater; you have made a great reputation as a scout and spy, as well as a fighter on the battlefield."

"I have done my duty as best I could," was the modest reply; "but now to get back to the business before us. I am down here for the purpose of trying to find out whether or not the British intend to advance and make an attack on Charleston."

"You may depend upon me to help you all I can, Captain Slater."

"Call me Dick."

"If you will call me Arthur."

"All right, and I shall be glad to have your assistance.

One thing that will aid me will be for me to have a place to retreat to in case I should get into trouble while spying around Savannah."

"You must make my home your headquarters."

"I will do so, and I will have my Liberty Boys go into camp near your house."

"There is an excellent place for a camp near the house, and we have plenty of provisions, so you will have food while there."

"That will be a big help."

They continued to converse as they rode along, and by the time they reached the spot where the two dead redcoats lay they had a good understanding, and Arthur Welby assured Dick that he would do all he could to help the Liberty Boys.

They dismounted when they reached the point where the dead troopers lay, and they dug a grave, using swords for the purpose, Dick having found that of Captain Fairfax where it had fallen when knocked out of the owner's hand in his duel with Arthur Welby.

When the two forms had been placed in the grave and covered up the young men mounted their horses and went on up the road.

"I think that we will meet my Liberty Boys soon," said Dick, "and then we will all go to your home together."

A mile farther on they met the company of Liberty Boys.

The youths were glad to see Dick, and were surprised to see that he had a companion.

The youth introduced Welby, and the Liberty Boys gave him a cordial greeting.

Any friend of Dick's was a friend of theirs as well.

"We are going to go into camp near Arthur's home," explained Dick. "Then I will make an attempt to do some spy-work to-night."

The two turned their horses' heads in the opposite direction and rode back in advance of the force of youths.

Presently they turned down a lane leading toward the west and shortly came to a good-sized log house.

"This is my home," said Arthur. Then he led the way around to the rear of the stable, where, in the timber, a hundred yards away, was an open space just right in size for an encampment for the Liberty Boys.

The youths at once dismounted and made themselves at home. They were veterans, young though they were, and it did not make any difference to them where they were.

As soon as Arthur had put his horse in the stable he came to Dick and said:

"We have oceans of meat in the smokehouse and a bin filled with cornmeal; tell your Liberty Boys to help themselves."

"All right; I will do so," said Dick; "and thank you, Arthur."

"You are welcome."

When Dick told the youths what Arthur had said they were delighted, and a rush was made for the smokehouse.

"I'll have some ham!" cried Bob Estabrook.

"Yah, und I vill some ham haf, minesellufs," from Carl Gookenspieler.

"It's mesilf will be afther bein' satisfied wid ham, begorra," from Patsy Brannigan.

"Yah, dot peen der—" began Carl, but he stubbed his toe and fell down, and Patsy Brannigan fell over the Dutch youth.

"Phwat d'ye mane by throwin' av me down, Cooky-spiller?" cried Patsy; "shure, an' it's mesilf wull giv' yez a b'atin' fur thot, so Oi wull!"

Then he leaped up and grabbed the Dutch youth, and was proceeding to put his threht into execution, but Dick interfered and made him desist.

As far as that was concerned, however, Carl was able to take care of himself. He was game as could be and belligerent, and would fight like a tiger at the drop of the hat. It was seldom that he and Patsy had a falling out, however; as a rule, they were the best of friends, and doubtless the fight would not have materialized, even had Dick not interfered.

The youths helped themselves to all the meat and cornmeal they wanted and then hastened to cook their supper. They were hungry and made a hearty meal of it.

As soon as it was dark Dick began making arrangements to start for Savannah disguised again.

"Are you going to try to enter the city?" asked Arthur Welby.

"Such is my intention," was Dick's reply.

"Then I have a suggestion to make."

"I shall be glad to hear it."

"It is this: That you go over to the Savannah River and go down to the city in a boat."

"How far is it to the river?"

"Three-quarters of a mile."

"And how far to the city?"

"Six miles."

The youth pondered a few moments.

"I believe that will be the best and safest way to go," he said, presently.

"I am sure of it, and I will go along and will remain in the boat and wait out in the river till you return."

"Very well."

"Say, I'm going along, Dick," said Bob Estabrook; "I'll stay in the boat with Arthur."

"All right; let's be going."

They took their departure, and Arthur Welby led the way, as he knew the path to the river and the others did not.

It did not take long to reach the stream, and Arthur led the way to where a boat was tied to a tree.

"Get in," he said; "I will untie the painter and be with you right away."

The two got in, and Arthur was not long in taking his place in the boat.

He took up the oars and rowed out into the stream.

When he was out near the middle of the river Arthur

turned the boat's prow down stream and began pulling in a leisurely manner.

"I suppose you are in no hurry," he remarked.

"No," replied Dick; "we will get there soon enough if you simply let the boat drift."

"I will keep on pulling easy-like," was the reply.

It was an hour before they came to the edge of the city.

Lights were shining in the city's streets, but along the water-front there were very few lights.

"I think it will be easy to make a landing unobserved," said Dick, in a low, cautious voice.

"Yes," replied Arthur; "shall I make the landing now?"

"Yes."

Arthur headed the boat in toward the shore, and presently he made a landing at a spot where the darkness was unrelieved by any gleam of light.

The three sat still and listened intently.

They did not wish to take chances of being discovered.

They did not hear any sounds to indicate that there was anyone in the vicinity, however, and so Dick got up and stepped ashore.

"When you hear a shrill, tremulous whistle, come to the shore," said Dick in a whisper, and Arthur said that he would do so.

Then Dick stole away in the direction of the main part of the city and Arthur rowed back out into the stream and brought the boat to a stop. Here he held it stationary by backing water gently.

Dick moved along at a moderate pace, and presently he was on a street that was thronged with people.

There were citizens and soldiers, and it was quite a lively scene, indeed.

Dick mingled with the throng, and felt himself in less danger than when he had been traversing the dark and seemingly deserted streets.

The youth wished to secure information regarding the intentions of the British, and whenever he came near a party of redcoats he paused and listened to their conversation.

For awhile he was not successful in hearing anything of interest, but finally he came across a party of soldiers who were talking of the things he wished to hear about.

He listened eagerly, and learned that there was no intention on the part of the British to move on Charleston at an early day. Indeed, it seemed to be the impression of the soldiers that the advance on Charleston would not be made until near the middle of the month.

This was what Dick had wished to learn, and he felt that his trip to Savannah had not been fruitless by any means.

"I will get away from here and go back to where the boys are," thought Dick.

He was on the point of turning away, when one of the soldiers happened to see him. The fellow leaped forward and seized Dick.

"You have been listening!" he cried. "You are a spy!"

"I am nothing of the kind!" cried Dick, and he jerked loose from the fellow.

"He was listening, comrades," said the soldier; "let's take him prisoner and see what General Prevost has to say about him."

The others—there were three—leaped forward and Dick realized that he was in danger of being captured.

It was not his intention to permit it, however.

He was determined to escape.

So he dealt the nearest redcoat a blow that knocked the fellow down, and then, turning, he ran down the street at the top of his speed.

"After him!" yelled one of the redcoats. "He is a spy!"

Instantly all was uproar and confusion.

Citizens and soldiers came running to see what the trouble was.

"Where is the spy?" shouted several.

"There he goes!" pointing toward Dick. "Head him off. Stop him!"

Soon a great crowd was after the Liberty Boy.

Others tried to head him off, but he ran so swiftly and turned the corners so quickly that those who attempted to stop him failed.

It then became a stern chase, so to speak.

The Liberty Boy was such a fast runner that he gradually drew away from his pursuers in spite of their efforts to overtake him.

"I guess I will get away," thought Dick.

On he ran.

After him came the crowd, yelling to him to stop.

Of course, they might as well have saved their wind, for Dick paid no attention to their commands.

He was soon in the dark streets, and here he felt comparatively safe.

"I can easily give them the slip now," he told himself.

And in this he was right.

He turned corner after corner in rapid succession, and presently he could hear no sounds of pursuit.

"Good!" he thought; "I am safe now."

Then he made his way toward the river at a more leisurely pace.

He did not have much difficulty in finding the point where he had got out of the boat, and, pausing there, he gave utterance to a shrill, tremulous whistle.

Presently he saw something dark approaching, and a few moments later the boat's prow touched the bank.

## CHAPTER V.

### GOLD-HUNTING.

"Is that you, Dick?" came in Bob's voice, in cautious accents.

"Yes, Bob."

"Good! Climb in."

Dick did so.

"Ready?" asked Arthur.

"Yes," replied Dick.

At this instant there came the sound of rushing feet, and a hoarse voice called out:

"Who's there?"

"Pull!" whispered Dick.

Arthur bent to the oars.

The boat shot out from the bank and moved out into the stream at a good rate of speed.

"Hello! Stop, I say! Who are you, anyway, and where the deuce are you going?" came to their ears.

Of course, the youths made no reply, and Arthur bent his back in his efforts to force the boat through the water at a lively rate.

"Stop, or I'll fire!"

Still the sentinel—for such the fellow was—received no reply, and suddenly there sounded a sharp report.

He had fired, as he had threatened.

The bullet did not come near the boat, however, much to the satisfaction of the inmates.

"We'll be out of range before he can reload the musket," said Dick.

"You are right," from Bob.

Arthur rowed rapidly and the boat moved along at a swift pace; soon it was in the middle of the river, and then he headed the boat upstream.

They considered themselves safe, now, and talked freely.

"Did you learn anything, Dick?" asked Bob.

"Yes; I overheard a conversation between some redcoats, and I gathered from it that the British do not intend moving against Charleston very soon.

"What are we going to do in the meantime, Dick?" asked Bob.

"I hardly know, Bob; simply lie around in camp and wait, I guess."

Bob uttered a dismal groan.

"That will never do," he said; "if there is anything in the world that I hate worse than any other thing it is to lie around and do nothing."

"I don't like it myself," said Dick.

There was silence for a few minutes, and then suddenly Dick exclaimed:

"I have it!"

"Have what?" queried Bob.

"I know what we will do while waiting for the British to make a move."

"All right; tell us what we will do."

"We will go on a gold-hunting expedition."

"Great guns, Dick! Explain yourself. Where is there any gold?"

Then Dick told about having saved the life of Red Fox, the Cherokee Indian, and how the redskin had told him that he knew where there was gold, plenty of it, to be had for the picking up, about two days' travel up the Savannah River.

Bob was excited.

"Say, that will be great!" exclaimed Bob; "but," he added, more soberly, "do you suppose that there is any truth in his story about the gold?"

"I think so; I don't see why he should have told me the story unless it were true; there was no necessity of his telling it at all."

"What do you think about it, Arthur?" asked Bob; "you live in this part of the country; have you ever heard of gold being found in Georgia?"

"Yes, I have heard rumors that such was the case," was the reply; "I should not be surprised if such were really the fact."

"I have the utmost faith in what the Indian told me," said Dick.

"But where is the Indian?" asked Bob; "you will never see him again, will you?"

"Yes, he told me where to look for him."

Then Dick explained that Red Fox had said he would be at the spot where Dick had killed the bear every evening just before sunset.

"So we will have no difficulty in finding him," he said in conclusion.

The youths took turns rowing, for Dick and Bob were both expert with the oars, and in this manner they were enabled to make good headway even though pulling against the stream.

They were an hour and a half in getting back up to the point where Arthur kept his boat, and then they landed and made their way back to the Liberty Boys' encampment.

The youths were asleep, all save the sentinels, and Dick and Bob lay down and went to sleep, Arthur Welby going to the house and going to bed.

They were up bright and early next morning, but there was nothing they could do until the Indian, Red Fox, could be found.

Dick did not think he could see the Indian before evening, and thought that he would have to lose the day, but about nine o'clock Red Fox walked into the encampment.

As may well be believed, Dick was delighted.

He shook hands with the redskin and said:

"I am glad that you have come, Red Fox."

"Red Fox is glad," was the reply; "white brother want Red Fox to do something?"

"Yes."

"Show um way to where gold is, mebbey?"

Dick nodded.

"You have guessed it the first time," he said. "I want you to guide us to the place where that gold is to be found."

"Red Fox be glad to do it."

"I knew you would be."

"Ugh. When white brother want start?"

"Right away."

"Injun ready."

"Will we be hindered by our horses? Or would they be a help?"

"No can git through woods on horses; mus' go afoot."

"All right; we'll leave our horses here, then."

They were assured by Arthur Welby that his father would look after the horses, and this was satisfactory to Dick. Arthur was to accompany the Liberty Boys.

An hour later they set out.

They went to the river and then walked along it.

"We go this way two days," explained Red Fox.

"Great guns! A two-days' walk!" almost gasped Bob Estabrook. "Say, wouldn't it have been easier to go up the river in boats?"

"No got boats," was the Indian's sententious reply.

All day, save for an hour's stop at noon to rest and eat dinner, the Liberty Boys walked onward.

They followed the winding river all the time, save for an occasional cut across from bend to bend, Red Fox having a knowledge of these short cuts.

That evening they went into camp on the bank of the Savannah River.

The night passed without anything occurring to disturb the quiet, and next morning the Liberty Boys were away again.

Along toward evening they got in among the hills, and Red Fox told Dick that they were almost to their destination.

"Be there 'fore sundown," said the Indian.

"I am glad to hear that," was the reply.

"White boy tired walkin'?" with a grin.

Dick nodded.

"Yes," he acknowledged; "we are not used to walking."

"Not easy like ridin' horse," was the Indian's reply.

An hour later they came to a point where it seemed evident that at one time the Savannah River had had two beds; the stream had been divided by a long, high ridge of ground, which had at that time evidently been an island. This ridge was half a mile long and of an average width of a quarter of a mile.

The stream now ran on the west side of the ridge, while on the east side there was only the sand and gravel that had once been beneath the flowing waters.

The Indian pointed to the dry river-bed and said:

"Gold in sand; heaps uv it."

This statement excited the Liberty Boys, and they were for beginning the search for gold at once; but Dick told them not to do this.

"The first thing to do is to find a good place for a camp," he said.

"Up on top ridge, 'mong trees, is good place fur camp," said Red Fox, pointing toward the ridge.

"I think you are right, Red Fox," said Dick.

The youths made their way up to the top of the ridge and soon found a splendid place for an encampment.

They proceeded to make themselves at home, and soon had everything arranged to suit them.

"We won't attempt to look for gold this evening," said Dick; "it will be dark in half an hour, so we will eat our suppers and lie down and get a good night's sleep; then in the morning we will get to work early."

The youths realized that this was the thing to do. It would not do much good to try to look for gold now, for it would soon be dark.

So they ate their suppers and lay down and went to sleep, with the exception of the sentinels, Red Fox having warned Dick that there was danger from Indians.

"Red Fox might keep Injuns frum hurtin' white boys," he said; "but no sure uv it."

"Is the Indian village near here?" asked Dick.

"Half day's walk," was the reply.

"Then the Indians might come down upon us," said Bob.

"Ugh. If they fin' out that white boys here gittin' gold they be mad," said Red Fox.

"We will have to be careful, then," said Dick.

Next morning when they had eaten breakfast the Liberty Boys made their way down and began searching amid the sand and gravel of the old river-bed for gold.

They soon found that Red Fox had told Dick the truth when he had stated that there was "heaps of gold" there.

Not having any way of getting the fine gold, the youths had to let this go, but they were enabled to gather the little nuggets, ranging in size from a mustard seed to a pea. Of this class of gold there was a sufficiency, however, so they were satisfied to not try to get the fine gold.

The youths were so excited that they talked rapidly and worked in the same manner. They gathered a lot of gold before noon, and then went up to the camp and ate dinner.

They had worked hard and were tired, but they did not take an hour's rest. They were too eager to be at work gathering the gold.

As soon as they had finished the meal they went back to the work and they put in the afternoon, quitting only when it grew dusk and it became impossible to see the yellow nuggets.

After they had eaten supper the youths compared notes. Each had secured a goodly lot of the yellow metal, and all were well satisfied.

"If the Indians don't come and drive us away we will soon secure enough gold to make us rich," said Bob Estabrook.

"Yes," agreed Dick; "but that is the trouble; the Indians are likely to come at any moment."

Next morning Red Fox told Dick that he would go up in the direction of the Indian village and see what the red-men were doing.

"Then Red Fox come back and let you know," he said.

"All right," said Dick.

The Indian was back before noon, with the information that his red brethren were in the village taking it easy.

"Red Fox no think they come down here," he said; "but do no harm to keep lockout."

Dick thought this a good idea, so he sent four of the youths up the river half a mile or so to keep watch for the coming of the Indians.

The Liberty Boys put in the day securing gold, and they had almost as good success as on the day before.

"We have no cause for complaint," said Dick that evening as they were eating supper.

"That's so," agreed Bob Estabrook; "we have secured a lot of gold in the two days."

Next day they worked steadily until the middle of the afternoon, and then the youths who had been sent up the river to keep watch for the redskins came running down to where the youths were at work.

"The Indians are coming!" cried one.

"Is that so?" exclaimed Dick; "how far away are they?"

"About a mile."

"How many are there of them?"

"Oh, there must be in the neighborhood of five hundred."

"Can there be so many as that, Red Fox?" asked Dick.

"Ugh," grunted the Indian; "if all the warriors are comin' there be that many."

"Then it won't do for us to try to fight them. We must get away from here."

He gave the order to go to the camp and get their weapons and blankets, and this was done. Then the youths set out down the river.

They had not gone far when Red Fox, who was accompanying the youths, said to Dick:

"Hear that cry of the whip-poor-will? That signal. My red brothers know you here, an' they comin' after you."

"Jove, I guess we are in for trouble, then, Dick!" exclaimed Bob, who heard what Red Fox said.

"I fear so, Bob."

## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE RAFT.

Bob was right; they were in for trouble.

The Indians had discovered the presence of the white youths, and were bent on capturing or killing the pale-faces.

In the Liberty Boys they had rather a difficult proposition, however. The youths were young, strong, possessed of wonderful staying qualities, and, moreover, they were experts in woodcraft, which was the most important thing of all.

Then, too, they had Red Fox to aid them; being a red-skin himself he would know what his red brethren would be likely to do.

The Liberty Boys did not stop when it became dark.

They kept on going.

They knew that it would not do to stop, for in that case the Indians would surround them, and then it would be an impossibility for them to escape.

"Our only chance lies in keeping right on moving," said Dick.

So they kept at it.

They made good progress; so good that in spite of the

fact that the Indians made all the haste possible, they did not gain any to speak of.

Along toward the small hours of the morning, however, the youths began to grow weary, and they found that they were not making very rapid headway.

They kept on going, however, till daylight, and then they paused in a clump of trees on a neck of land which formed a peninsula, the river making a bend at this point.

The youths were so tired that they felt that they must have some rest, and it was decided that this was as good a place to make the stop as could be found.

Red Fox looked very sober.

"My red brothers will ketch up with us," he said; "we no git 'way frum here?"

"I'm afraid you are right," said Dick; "but we can't go any farther without rest, so may as well stop here and make a fight of it."

Dick stationed some sentinels at the point where the neck of the peninsula was narrowest, and then the other youths proceeded to eat their frugal breakfast.

This done, they threw themselves down to get some rest, and many of them had scarcely touched the ground before they were asleep.

Dick was worried.

He did not like the idea of his Liberty Boys meeting their deaths at the hands of redskins.

It was his wish that, if they must die, they should die on the field of battle while fighting for liberty and independence.

In the hope that there might be some way of escaping from the peninsula, other than by way of the narrow neck of land they had traversed in coming, Dick made his way to the extreme end of the peninsula and looked all around him.

He looked across the river, which at this point was only about two hundred yards wide, and started.

Back from the stream, in a clearing, stood a goodly-sized log house.

"Somebody lives there," thought Dick; "perhaps there may be quite a settlement over there; but it will not help us any, for we can't get across."

Then something else caught his eye: Tied to a tree almost opposite where Dick stood was a good-sized raft made of logs, and on the raft were a number of covered and strapped bales.

"Likely the bales consist of hemp," thought Dick.

He wondered why the raft was there and why the bales were on it.

Suddenly it came to him: Some of the settlers of the vicinity were going to float the raft down to Savannah and market the bales of hemp. Yes, this was surely it, and they would be able to get something for the logs as well.

Then of a sudden a thought struck Dick:

Was it not possible that the raft would furnish his Liberty Boys with a means of escape from the Indians?

He believed that such would be the case, if they could get across the stream.

This could be done, he thought; it must be done!

He looked at the surface of the stream, and for the first time noted that there was a series of ripples extending diagonally across the river.

"The water must be shallow where the ripples are," he told himself.

He believed that the youths could wade across.

"We will try it at any rate," he told himself.

At this instant there sounded the report of a musket. This was followed by three more in quick succession.

"The Indians are advancing to attack us!" he said to himself, and then he ran toward the point where the youths were.

He found them, muskets in hands, and ready to give the redskins a hot fight.

The sentinels appeared at this moment, and they reported that the Indians were coming.

"Keep a sharp lookout for the redskins," ordered Dick; "and at the same time move back slowly and steadily toward the end of the peninsula. I think we will be able to escape."

"How, Dick?" asked Bob, eagerly.

"I think we will be able to get across the river, Bob."

"But the Indians will be able to do so, too."

Then Dick explained about the raft, and the word went around among the youths, who were delighted by the thought that they had a chance to make their escape.

They moved slowly and steadily back, at the same time they kept watch in the direction of the neck of the peninsula.

Occasionally they caught sight of a redskin, and when this occurred there was usually two or three reports of muskets and the Indian seldom escaped being killed or wounded.

The Indians soon learned that it was dangerous to show themselves, and so they were careful not to do so. They could afford to wait till the paleface youths had retreated to the extreme end of the peninsula, when they could close in gradually, get close enough for the purpose and then shoot the youths down with arrows.

They did not suspect that their intended prey was expecting to get safely away.

When the youths reached the extreme end of the peninsula Dick pointed to the ripples.

"I think we will be able to wade across by following the course indicated by the ripples," said Dick. "Follow me, all, and we will make the attempt, at any rate. And when we get across we will get on that raft and float down the stream. By so doing we may succeed in making our escape."

He entered the water as he ceased speaking, and the youths followed as rapidly as possible.

Those who came last kept a sharp lookout for the Indians, and by firing whenever they did catch sight of one of the redskins they managed to keep them at a respectful distance.

The Indians did not discover what was taking place until

after the Liberty Boys were all in the water and were well out in the stream.

Then the red demons rushed forward, yelling with anger, and as soon as they reached the end of the peninsula they sent a flight of arrows after the youths.

The majority of the arrows fell short.

One or two of the rearmost of the Liberty Boys were slightly wounded, but before the redskins could send another flight of arrows the youths were out of range entirely.

Then the redskins rushed into the water by the scores and did their best to overtake the fugitives, or to at least get close enough so that their arrows would inflict damage.

The youths got through the water at a lively rate of speed, however, and the Indians could not gain on them.

As soon as they arrived at the farther shore the Liberty Boys ran down the bank of the river to where the raft was and quickly climbed onto it.

When all were on the rope was untied and the raft was pushed away from the shore with poles, a number being found.

The youths poled as hard as they could and managed to make the raft move down stream considerably faster than the current would have carried it.

About one-third of the force of redskins had got across the river, and now they moved down the stream, some on one side and some on the other, keeping pace with the raft.

This was not a difficult thing to do; indeed, they were able to easily get ahead of the raft.

They did this, and the thought came to Dick that himself and comrades were far from being out of danger. They could, by keeping the raft in the middle of the stream, keep out of arrow-shot distance of the Indians, provided the river was as wide all the way down as it was at this point.

Whether this was the case or not Dick was not sure, so he asked Red Fox about it.

"There one place where river not half so wide as here," was the Indian's reply; "it narrow fur long way—mile, mebby. Red Fox's red brothers be close 'nuff then to shoot arrows onto raft."

"That is rather a bad outlook," said Dick.

"Yes, but if we get through there in safety we will be all right," said Bob.

Red Fox shook his head.

"Not sure 'bout that," he said, soberly; "Injuns swim out an' climb on raft, mebby."

"I had thought of that," said Dick, soberly.

There could be little doubt about the matter: The Liberty Boys were in great danger. They had killed three Indians back at the peninsula and had wounded several, and the redskins were thirsting for revenge.

"You ought not to have come on the raft with us, Red Fox," said Dick; "your brothers will put you to death sure if they capture you."

"Red Fox stay with white brother," he said; "white boy save Injun's life, then Injun's life b'long to white boy—ugh."

"Oh, no; I don't look at it that way at all," said Dick; "you owe me nothing for what I did for you. It was my duty to render you assistance."

The Indian shook his head gravely. He looked at the matter in a different light.

"Red Fox stay with white brother as long as um stay in this part of country," he said, simply. "No 'fraid uv red brothers."

"How far is it to where the river is narrow, Red Fox?" asked Dick, presently.

The Indian looked thoughtful, and then said:

"We go as fast as we goin' now an' we git there 'bout noon," he replied.

The Indians could be seen hurrying along the shores, and it was seen that they were moving faster than the raft was going.

"They git to place where river is narrow 'way ahead uv us," said Red Fox.

Dick nodded.

"Yes," he said; "and we can't make the raft go any faster."

Occasionally some of the Indians would let fly some arrows, but the missiles always fell far short. They did not come anywhere near the raft.

"Heap young braves," said Red Fox, with a curling of the lip; "no sense 'tall. Waste heap lot uv arrows."

"I wish that they would waste all their arrows," said Bob Estabrook, with a grin.

Onward moved the raft.

The youths were careful to keep it near the middle of the stream, and by so doing they kept out of range of the Indians' missiles.

About eleven o'clock the Liberty Boys saw smoke rising above the trees at a point seemingly three or four miles down the river.

"I wonder what that means?" said Dick, looking earnestly at the smoke.

"Red Fox think um know," said the Indian; "Injuns have set timber on fire; make it so hot white brothers no can git through without bein' scorched bad."

"Do you really think that?" asked Dick.

The Indian nodded gravely.

"Fed Fox sure uv it," he said.

"Then we will have to run a gauntlet of fire as well as of arrows," said Bob Estabrook.

"Ugh," grunted the Indian.

"That will be a dangerous piece of business," said Mark Morrison.

"Yes, indeed," from Dick.

"Well, get your muskets ready," said Bob; "we will have a warm time getting through that narrow strip of river, and so we might as well be ready to make a hot fight of it while we are about it."

"Yes, we will do the best we can," said Dick; "we may not get through, but we will hope for the best."

On moved the raft.

Closer and closer it drew to the narrow strip of river.

When the entrance to the narrow part of the stream came in sight a sober look settled on Dick's face.

"Even though we remain in the middle of the river we will be in range from both banks," he said; "we are in for it, I guess."

"Yes, and look at the smoke," said Bob; "the fire along the shore will make it so warm for us that we will come out, if we come out at all, well-baked."

Nearer and nearer to the entrance to the narrow part of the stream the raft drew.

The Indians could be seen standing along the bank, scores and scores of them, and each and every warrior had bow and arrow in his hands.

"Get behind the bales, boys," ordered Dick; "we will be in range quickly and we must not expose ourselves needlessly."

The youths obeyed, with the exception of those who were poling, and a few minutes later the raft entered the narrow part of the stream.

While some of the Liberty Boys kept the raft as near the middle of the stream as possible, others fired at the Indians along the shore.

The Indians returned the fire with arrows.

The heat from the burning timber was almost unbearable.

## CHAPTER VII.

### "THE WARMEST WORK ON RECORD."

The Liberty Boys kept up the firing as rapidly and constantly as possible.

They dropped a number of the Indians, dead and wounded; the redskins, on their part, discharged flight after flight of arrows, many of the missiles striking on the raft and in the bales. Some of them found a resting-place in the bodies of some of the Liberty Boys, but luckily no mortal wounds were inflicted.

It was indeed a hot fight in a double sense.

"Say, this is warm work!" said Bob Estabrook, mopping his face with a handkerchief.

"I should say it is about the warmest work on record," said Arthur Welby, who was doing his share of the fighting.

"Yah, dot is vat I vould haf saided, uf I had spoge about dot," said Carl Gookenspieler, who, fat as a pig, was wet with perspiration.

"Shure an' av dhe bad phlace is innny hotter nor phwat dhis is, it's mesilf is not afther wantin' to go dhere," said Patsy Brannigan so seriously that some of the youths could not keep from laughing, serious as the situation was.

"I guess you will find it hotter there, Patsy," said Bob.

"An' are yez afther sayin' thot Oi wull find it thot way, Bob, me bye?" said Patsy; "Oi don't t'ink so, fur Oi'm not goin' dhere, begorra. Dhis experience wull be a warnin' to me."

This conversation had occurred while the speakers were engaged in reloading their muskets, and now they turned to the work of killing redskins.

The current was pretty swift in this narrow part of the stream, and as it was as much as one's life was worth to attempt to guide the raft with the poles, Dick ordered the youths to keep behind the bales and let the raft drift with the current.

"I guess the current is strongest near the middle of the stream, anyway," said Dick.

The heat was something terrible.

It was all the Liberty Boys could do to endure it.

Their skin seemed to be drying up; their lips were parched.

It was difficult to get their breath.

The raft was now more than halfway through the narrow part of the stream.

So far as the danger from the arrows of the Indians was concerned, the worst part of it was past, but the fire was worse the rest of the distance than it had been, so far.

The Liberty Boys lay behind the bales and gasped for breath.

They did not see how they were to endure the terrible heat while the raft was drifting the rest of the way through the narrow part of the river.

They had to endure it, however; there was no such a thing as getting out of doing so.

It seemed to them almost as though the flames from the burning trees were lapping right over onto the raft, but as a matter of fact the flames were at least fifty yards distant on both sides.

On drifted the raft.

Five—ten—fifteen minutes passed, and then the raft shot out of the narrow part of the stream onto the more placid waters, where the river was wider.

Four of the Liberty Boys got up and began poling and the raft moved along more rapidly.

As soon as it was where the Indians could reach it with their arrows the Liberty Boys rushed to the edge of the raft and dipped up great handfuls of water and bathed their heated faces.

"Great guns!" panted Bob Estabrook; "somebody said something about that being the warmest work on record, and I guess he was right."

"Yah, dot peen-der trut' about dot pizness, you pet me," panted Carl Gookenspieler.

The Dutch youth bent down to get a drink, and, becoming overbalanced, fell headfirst into the water.

There was a splash and a gurgle, and the youth went under out of sight.

"Cookyspieler has toombed overboard!" cried Patsy Brannigan, in some excitement; "ghrab hould av 'im, somebody; dhe spalphan can't shwim."

At this moment the Dutch youth popped up out of the water close beside the raft and not far from the rear end and was seized by a couple of the Liberty Boys and dragged aboard.

Carl gasped and gurgled and finally disgorged a lot of water, after which he sat up and looked around him with such a woe-begone look that the spectators, in spite of the fact that they were not feeling comfortably by any means, could not help laughing.

In truth the spectacle, taken as a whole, was enough to make one laugh. Carl was wet as a drowned rat, and his hair was stringing down over his face and in his eyes, and the woe-begone expression on his round, Dutch countenance set all off, making of it a comical picture to say the least.

Patsy Brannigan slapped his thigh and roared, and then he pointed his finger at the Dutch youth in derision.

"Shure an' ain't yez afther bein' a pretthy spicimen av a hooman bein', Cookyspiller!" he exclaimed; "av Oi t'ought Oi would iver look loike thot, it's mesilf would jhoomp into the river an' ind it roight here an' now, begorra!"

"All right," said Carl. "Id is your dime to shoomp indo der riffer; go aheat, and see how you vos lige id."

"Oh, it's mesilf phwat knows thot Oi would not loike it, so yez wull have to excuse me."

Carl got up and began wringing the water out of his clothes and the youths went back to the work of bathing their hands and faces in the cool water.

It was quite a relief to them after having been through the terrible heat.

"Are there any more narrow places in the river, Red Fox?" asked Dick.

The Indian shook his head.

"No more like that," he replied.

"No places narrow enough so that it will be dangerous?"

"No; an' I no think my red brothers come enny farther, ennyway."

This proved to be the case.

The Indians turned back and soon none were to be seen.

"Why did they do that?" asked Dick.

"They 'fraid to leave Injun village without braves to guard it," said Red Fox.

"Why so? What is there to hurt the women and children?"

"Another tribe is at war with my tribe, and it has gone on the warpath, an' my red brothers 'fraid to leave village."

"So that's it, eh?"

"Ugh."

"All right; I'm glad to hear it."

All the rest of the day and all through the night the raft drifted down the river, and when morning came the point nearest to the home of Arthur Welby was reached.

Those of the Liberty Boys who had been wounded—fortunately none had been killed—were getting along nicely, and their wounds were not of a character to make them unable to walk, so all made their way to the Welby home and the Liberty Boys went into camp at the same spot where they had been encamped before.

Dick went to the house with Arthur, and when the

young man's parents had given him a greeting, they shook hands with him.

"We are glad to have Arthur back home again, safe and sound," said Mrs. Welby.

"I am glad he got back safely, Mrs. Welby," said Dick; "he is a good fighter; however, and quite capable of taking care of himself under most any circumstances."

After some further conversation Dick went back to the encampment and held a council with Bob Estabrook, Mark Morrison and Sam Sanderson.

After they had talked the matter over fully it was decided that the proper thing for them to do was to remain where they were and keep watch of the British.

"Then as soon as they start on the march toward Charleston we can hasten there ahead of them and warn General Lincoln," said Dick, in conclusion.

"Yes, so we can," said Bob. "Well, it will be necessary to keep a number of scouts and spies at work between here and Savannah, won't it?"

"Yes."

"All right; I speak for a place as one of the spies."

Several of the youths spoke up, and Dick told them to go ahead and keep a sharp lookout for the British.

"Don't let them steal a march and get past you," he said.

The youths declared that they would see to it that the British did not get past them.

Then they set out and the other Liberty Boys settled down to take things as easy as possible while awaiting developments.

About the middle of the afternoon Arthur Welby mounted his horse and rode in the direction of Savannah.

Dick happened to be standing near as Arthur started, and he called out:

"Where are you going, Arthur?"

Arthur looked around, saw a smile on Dick's face and flushed slightly, after which he laughed and shook his fist at the Liberty Boy in playful threat.

"I'm going down the road a ways," he replied.

"Toward Savannah, eh?"

"Yes."

"All right; give her my regards, old fellow."

"I will," and with a laugh he rode onward.

Arthur was going down the road with the purpose of trying to see Miss Gertrude Amesly.

He was in love with the young lady, and as he did not dare venture into Savannah, the only other thing he could do was to try to see her when she was out riding.

It had been nearly a week since he first met the young woman, and he did not know whether his quest would be successful or not.

He was determined to make the attempt, however, and much to his joy, he met Miss Gertrude about a mile and a half north of Savannah.

She tried to control her expression so as not to betray that she was glad, but failed, and Arthur was secretly delighted, for he made up his mind that the young lady did not look upon him with utter indifference.

After they had exchanged greetings Arthur turned his horse's head in the same direction as that ridden by Miss Amesly and they rode along together talking as only young people know how to talk.

"Where have you been, Mr. Welby?" Gertrude asked; "I—I—that is——"

"You mean that you expected to see me?—to meet me here on the road?" exclaimed Arthur, eagerly, his handsome face lighting up.

The girl blushed and then said:

"Well, I—that is—I thought you might be along this way, but I failed to see you."

"I have been away, Miss Amesly."

"Ah, indeed?"

"Yes; I would have been here had I been in the vicinity, you may be sure!"

The look that the young man gave Gertrude was so eloquent that she blushed even more rosily than before and turned her head away to hide her confusion.

"Isn't it lovely weather?" remarked Gertrude, demurely, when she had regained control of her expression.

"Yes, indeed; but there are more interesting subjects for discussion than the weather, Miss Amesly; let us talk of one of them."

"Very well; choose the subject."

"I will do so. Do you know I was afraid that if I was so fortunate as to meet you at all you would have an escort, Miss Amesly?"

"Indeed? I presume it was your fear of a personal encounter that made you afraid I would have an escort?" with a smile.

Arthur laughed.

"If I could be sure that all your escorts would be made of the same kind of material as was Captain Fairfax I should not be afraid. But that was really not my reason; I was afraid that you would have an escort, and that I would not get to talk to you."

"Ah, now you are stooping to flattery!"

"No, indeed; that is something I don't indulge in."

The two rode slowly onward conversing in this strain and taking no note of their surroundings, and suddenly there came the sharp report of a pistol and Arthur's hat was knocked off his head by the bullet!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MEETING.

Gertrude gave utterance to a scream.

"Oh, are you hurt, Mr. Welby?" she cried.

"No; but I will hurt that skulking-coward if I can get my hands on him!" replied the young man, and he leaped off his horse and ran toward the point from which the shot had seemed to come.

He looked all around, but did not catch sight of anyone.

The would-be assassin had fled.

Arthur returned to where Miss Gertrude was and mounted his horse.

"Did you see nothing of the person who fired the cowardly shot, Mr. Welby?" the young woman asked.

"No, Miss Amesly; he got away quickly after firing."

"I wonder who it could have been?"

The young man shook his head.

"I'm sure I could not guess."

The girl looked at Arthur's hat, which he had picked up and donned before remounting.

"He has nearly ruined your hat," she said.

"Yes, but better that than my head," with a smile.

"True," with a shudder; then with an apprehensive glance around she went on.

"Let us ride onward. He may be hidden near and might try another shot."

They rode forward at a gallop, and after a few minutes of silence Miss Amesly said, thoughtfully:

"I wonder if it was Captain Fairfax who fired at you?"

Arthur nodded.

"I think it likely, Miss Amesly; I have no enemies in this part of the country that I know of, save the captain."

"It was he who did it, I am sure."

"That is my opinion, and if the captain and I should meet again I shall call him to an account."

"You must be careful, Ar—I mean Mr. Welby; the captain is coward enough to take you at a disadvantage if he gets the opportunity."

"You came very near calling me Arthur," said the young man, his eyes shining eagerly; "please do so, Miss Amesly." His mind was more occupied with this than with the thought of possible danger to himself from Captain Fairfax.

"I will call you Arthur if you will call me Gertrude," with a blush.

"It is a bargain!" quickly and eagerly.

They rode onward till they came to the top of the hill, where Gertrude and Captain Fairfax had stopped, the afternoon that the officer made the mistake of threatening to carry the young woman away a prisoner.

Here they paused and gazed all around them with interest. They were able to get a fine view in nearly all directions, and especially was the view beautiful looking toward Savannah.

"Isn't the view beautiful?" exclaimed Gertrude, enthusiastically.

"Beautiful indeed!" was the reply, and the girl turned her head to see her companion's eyes fixed on her face.

"Arthur!" she said, chidingly; "you are not looking at the view at all."

"But at something infinitely more beautiful!" was the quick and earnest reply. "Gertrude," he went on, before she could interrupt him; "I love you! I have loved you from the first moment my eyes rested upon your face! I loved you when I was fighting the captain, and that was one thing that made it so easy for me to conquer him."

Tell me that you are not angry with me, Gertrude, for speaking thus!" as the girl made no reply. "I hope that I have not earned your displeasure; I could not help telling you of my love; indeed I could not help it!"

Gertrude's eyes were on the ground, and there was a heightened color in her cheeks. After Arthur ceased speaking she continued to look at the ground for a few moments, and then she turned her eyes toward Arthur's face; she met his gaze, and her eyes drooped.

"I'm not angry," she said, gently, and there was something in her tones that thrilled the young man and made him feel happy.

His face lighted up.

"Gertrude!" he cried, his voice trembling; "do you—can it be possible that you love me?"

For a few moments there was silence, and then Gertrude said in a low, tremulous voice:

"I—believe—that—I—do, Arthur!"

They were side by side, and close enough so that Arthur could do so, and he reached out and encircled the girl's waist with his arm.

"Will you be my wife, Gertrude?" he asked, in an eager, intense voice.

"Yes, Arthur," was the whispered reply.

"One kiss, then, sweetheart, to bind the contract!" said the young man, and the girl gave him a kiss.

Then she looked up and down the road and laughed in a nervous manner.

"Oh, Arthur, what if somebody had been coming!" she exclaimed.

"But nobody is coming," he laughed; "and it would have been no business of theirs had such been the case."

"True, but——"

They talked quite awhile, and then Gertrude suggested that it was time she was going back to Savannah.

They rode slowly along and talked as they went.

Arthur noticed that the girl looked at the timber at both sides of the road as though watching for something, and asked her what she was looking for.

"I am afraid that Captain Fairfax may be hidden somewhere and might shoot at you again," was the reply.

Arthur laughed.

"Have no fears, Gertrude," he said; "the worthy captain will not make another attempt on my life this afternoon, I am sure. He is miles away from here by this time."

But Gertrude was not reassured. She shook her head doubtfully.

"I don't know about that," she said; "from what I know of the captain, he is a persistent fellow, and he will not give up with the failure of one attempt."

"I'll keep a sharp lookout for him, Gertrude. Let's not think or talk of him. Let us talk of something more pleasant."

They did so, judging by the expression on their faces, for there was a look of contentment, yes happiness, there.

What they said has no place here; it was only for each other's ears.

When they were within a mile of Savannah, Gertrude told Arthur that he had better leave her.

"I will be in no danger in riding alone," she said; "you would be in danger in venturing nearer the city."

"Very well; I will stop."

He gave a quick glance up and then down the road, saw that no one was in sight, and then bent over and took, not one, but several kisses.

"Goodby, sweetheart!" he said; "may I hope to see you again to-morrow afternoon?"

"Yes, Arthur."

"I am glad of that, Gertrude."

The girl hesitated and then said:

"I have been thinking, Arthur; you are a patriot, and I am the daughter of a British officer. I am afraid that there will be trouble for us when I tell father that I am your promised wife."

"Likely, Gertrude; but—you will keep your promise to me just the same, sweetheart?"

"Yes, Arthur; no matter how strenuously father may oppose my marrying you, I will keep my promise, for—I love you!"

The last three words were low-spoken, but Arthur heard them, and his face lighted up with joy, and again he kissed the woman he loved so well.

They talked awhile longer, being loath to part, but finally the girl said, "I must go, Arthur; goodby—till to-morrow," and then she rode away toward the city, Arthur turning his horse's head in the opposite direction and riding away at a gallop.

"I would like to meet that cowardly captain now!" he said to himself; "I would have a settlement with him!"

As he rode along he kept a sharp lookout, for he thought it possible that the officer might try to shoot him from the roadside.

Nothing of the kind occurred, however, and he reached his home in safety.

"Did you see her?" asked Dick as the young man rode up and leaped to the ground; "but I see you did," the youth added, with a smile; "the fact is written all over your face in great big letters."

Arthur blushed and then laughed.

"Yes, I saw her," he acknowledged.

"And the interview must have been of a pleasing character, Arthur; are congratulations in order?"

"There is no use trying to keep anything from you, Dick, I see that," with a laugh; "yes, Gertrude has promised to be my wife."

Dick gave the young man his hand.

"I congratulate you sincerely, Arthur," he said, earnestly; "my opinion is that in Miss Amesly you have won a jewel. She is a noble-hearted young woman, I am sure."

"And so am I sure of it, Dick. I certainly think that I am to be congratulated."

Then he led the horse into the stable, unbridled and unsaddled him, and came out and again entered into conversation with Dick.

He told the Liberty Boy about the attempt that had been made to shoot him down from the roadside.

"That was the work of that cowardly captain, Arthur, I'll wager," said Dick at once.

"That is my idea, Dick."

"Yes, there can be no doubt regarding it; doubtless he haunts the road leading northward from Savannah in order to get a chance to see Miss Amesly; he saw you with her, and his jealous anger caused him to try to murder you."

"Likely you are right." Then a thought struck Arthur, and he added:

"Isn't there danger that the scoundrel may try to capture her and carry her away, Dick?"

The youth looked thoughtful.

"There is danger of such a thing, Arthur, I fear."

A grim look appeared on Arthur's face.

"I am going to see if I can do something to make this impossible of accomplishment," he said; "to-morrow I will make an attempt at hunting the scoundrel down."

"My Liberty Boys will help you."

"Thank you, Dick."

They went to where the youths were, and Dick told them what they would be required to do on the morrow.

The Liberty Boys were well pleased.

"We will be glad to help you, Arthur," said Bob.

"Yes, yes!" in a chorus of voices.

They talked awhile, and then Arthur went to the house and ate his supper, the Liberty Boys having made a raid on the smokehouse and secured a lot of hams and bacon for their evening meal.

After supper Arthur came out to the encampment, and Dick said:

"I believe I will go down to Savannah again, Arthur, in your boat. Perhaps I may be able to learn when the British intend leaving the city and advancing toward Charleston."

"You are welcome to the use of the boat, Dick; and I will go along and row it, as I did the other time."

"I will go also," said Bob.

Dick gave the other youths instructions, and then the three set out.

They were not long in arriving at the river, and, getting into the boat, they started down the stream.

As before, they made a landing at a dark point, and Dick went ashore, Arthur and Bob remaining in the boat.

Dick made his way up into the city and moved along the streets, listening to the conversation of the British soldiers.

Wherever he came upon a party of redcoats engaged in conversation he paused and listened.

He picked up some information, and at last succeeded in hearing what he wished to hear.

He learned that the British were intending to march out of Savannah and advance toward Charleston on the day after to-morrow.

"Jove, I'm glad that I came down here," thought Dick; "now we will know just what to do."

He did not linger longer, but turned and made his way back in the direction of the river.

He was soon there, and, getting into the boat, gave the command to pull out into the stream.

Arthur obeyed, and a few minutes later they were moving up the river at a very good rate of speed.

"Did you learn anything of importance, Dick?" asked Bob.

"Yes; I learned that the British are to march out of Savannah and advance upon Charleston day after to-morrow."

"Good! We will know what to do, now."

"Yes; we will remain where we are till then and will break camp and make our way to Charleston by slow stages, keeping just far enough in advance to be out of harm's way, and by so doing we will be able to keep a lookout for foraging parties of redcoats."

"That's so, and we will make it lively for them."

"Yes, so we will."

When the youths arrived at the point where Arthur kept his boat they made a landing and then hastened through the timber to the encampment.

Arthur went to his home and to bed, and Dick and Bob lay down in the encampment and were soon asleep.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CAPTAIN FAIRFAX CAPTURED.

"Ha! I have found you, you scoundrel!"

"And what are you going to do about it, you peasant dog?"

"I am going to have a settlement with you."

"What about?"

"You know very well."

"I do not."

"You do! You tried to assassinate me yesterday when I was riding along the road with Miss Amesly."

"I did not."

"I know that you did, and for fear that you may make more attempts of the same character, and with better success, I am going to have the matter settled once and for all right here and now."

Arthur Welby and Captain Fairfax, the deserter, stood face to face in a little glade in the timber at a point two miles from Savannah and perhaps a quarter of a mile from the road leading northward from the city.

Arthur, Dick and the Liberty Boys had left the encampment that morning and had been at work all the forenoon searching for Captain Fairfax.

As has been shown, Arthur found the captain; they came suddenly face to face and the above conversation ensued while the two stood glaring into each other's eyes.

"What do you purpose doing?" asked the captain, and

a close observer would have noticed that there was a look of fear on his face.

"I will tell you: We will fight a duel."

The captain looked anything but pleased.

"We fought one duel," he said; "isn't that enough?"

"I thought it would be, but you tried to shoot me down from the roadside yesterday, and as I do not like to feel that you may make a success of such an attempt at almost any moment, I am going to have the matter settled. I am going to be fair, however, and give you an equal chance with myself."

"All right; we will fight a duel—and I will kill you, you peasant dog!"

"No doubt you will try to do so, you cowardly would-be assassin, but I don't think that you will succeed."

"What weapons shall we use?"

"As you have no sword, I suppose we will have to use pistols."

"That is satisfactory to me."

"Very well; walk back ten paces, turn and draw your pistol; I will wait till you are ready."

At this moment Dick Slater appeared on the scene.

"Hello, what are you going to do?" he asked.

"We are going to fight a duel," said Arthur.

Dick shook his head.

"You must not do it," he said, decidedly.

"Why not?" in surprise; "I cannot permit this scoundrel to run at large, for he will sooner or later succeed in killing me."

"I know; but you must not give him a chance to kill you."

"I have no fear that he will succeed in doing so."

"But there is a chance, and you have no right to take it." Then Dick stepped close to the youth and whispered:

"Remember, Gertrude, your life is scarcely your own to risk recklessly. You must think of her."

"That's so; but what shall I do? I don't feel like letting him go scot free, now that I have found him."

"Nor will we do so. We will make him a prisoner and manage to in some way turn him over to the British. Gertrude's father will be delighted to get hold of him."

"That's so; the captain is a deserter, isn't he?"

"Yes."

Arthur's face shone with satisfaction.

"That will solve the problem," he said; "we will turn him over to——"

Crack!

The captain suspected that some plan for his undoing was being discussed—the two talked so low he could not understand what was said—and had taken his chance and fired at Arthur.

The bullet missed the young man by a hair's breadth.

Seeing that he had failed in his attempt at killing the object of his hatred and jealousy, the captain whirled and ran away with all his might.

"The cowardly scoundrel!" gasped Arthur.

"After him!" cried Dick.

They bounded in pursuit of the fugitive.

The ex-officer was not a very fast runner, and the two began gaining quite rapidly.

"You may as well stop and give up," called out Dick; "we will catch you, anyway."

The captain gave a glance back over his shoulder, saw that the two were close upon him, and came to a stop.

He attempted to draw another pistol, but Dick had him covered with a pistol instantly, and gave utterance to the stern command:

"Hands up, or you are a dead man!"

The captain lifted his hands in the air promptly.

"I give up," he said.

"You are sensible," said Dick; "Arthur, bind his arms together behind his back."

"All right, Dick."

The young man did this, using the captain's belt for the purpose.

"What are you going to do with me?" the prisoner growled.

"Something that you won't like," said Dick.

The captain looked worried.

"Well, tell me what you are going to do with me, and relieve my mind of suspense."

"Very well; we are going to turn you over to the British, who will be glad to get you, no doubt."

The captain paled.

"Don't do that!" he cried; "anything but that!"

"It is the proper thing to do," said Arthur; "you are a deserter."

"But they will kill me—shoot me like a dog!"

"And serve you right," said Dick, coldly. "You are a deserter, a traitor."

Captain Fairfax started in to plead that they would not give him up to the British, but the two would not listen to him, and Dick commanded him to keep silent.

"You are simply wasting your breath," he said; "we have made up our minds and will not change them."

They conducted him out to the road, and just as they reached it Gertrude Amesly came riding up.

When she saw that Dick and her lover had made a prisoner of Captain Fairfax she was well pleased.

"Now you are in a position to appreciate the fact that it is bad policy to be a villain, Captain Fairfax," she said.

He winced, but said nothing. He was almost broken down in spirit. The heart seemed to be taken almost out of him.

"How are we going to manage this affair, Dick?" asked Arthur; "it would not be wise for us to venture into Savannah."

"Let me offer a suggestion," said Gertrude.

"We shall be glad to have you do so," from Dick.

"Very well; my suggestion is this: That I ride back to the city and tell my father that you have Captain Fairfax a prisoner, and he will send some soldiers here to get him and conduct him to Savannah."

"That is a good suggestion," said Arthur.

"Yes, indeed," from Dick; "you may do as you have suggested, Miss Amesly."

"Very well."

She turned her horse's head toward Savannah and rode away at a gallop.

The two sat down under a tree at the roadside and waited. The prisoner was seated between them.

They did not have long to wait.

In less than an hour Miss Amesly was back, accompanied by two troopers, who had an extra horse bridled and saddled.

The two troopers aided Captain Fairfax to mount the horse and then climbed into their own saddles and looked inquiringly at Gertrude.

"Are you going back with us, Miss Amesly?" asked one, touching his hat.

"No, I will continue my ride, Jasper," was the reply; "tell father that I said I would be home in time for his two o'clock luncheon."

"Very well," and the two rode away, leading the prisoner's horse between them.

They had not gone far before Captain Fairfax began trying to persuade the troopers to let him go free.

They would not listen to him.

Then he tried to bribe them.

"I know where gold in great quantities is to be found," he told them; "and if you will free me and come with me we will go and make ourselves rich."

This had no effect; the troopers were not to be bribed or bought.

"You may as well save your wind," said Jasper; "we are going to take you into Savannah and turn you over to Colonel Amesly."

The prisoner saw that it was useless to say more, and he relapsed into sullen silence, which remained unbroken till the city was reached.

Colonel Amesly rubbed his hands with satisfaction when the prisoner was brought before him.

"Aha, so they got you, did they, you traitor!" he exclaimed.

"I—I—" stammered the captain; "I hope, Colonel Amesly, that—that——"

He floundered and broke down. There was absolutely nothing that he could say.

"It is useless to attempt to make any defense, Captain Fairfax," said the colonel, sternly; "you are a traitor, a deserter and a scoundrel in the bargain, and the death that should be meted out to such a man shall be yours."

The prisoner shuddered, but said nothing. He was smart enough to understand that it would be a waste of breath.

The colonel ordered that the prisoner be taken and placed under guard, and this was done.

When the troopers had taken their departure, accompanied by the prisoner, Gertrude turned to the two young men, and, addressing Arthur, said:

"You don't know how glad I am that Captain Fairfax

has been captured! Now I shall not have that awful fear that at any moment he may shoot you down from ambush."

"I confess that I shall feel better myself," said Arthur.

"It certainly is not pleasant to have the feeling that you are in constant danger of being shot down," said Dick.

They talked awhile, and then Dick said he would have to get back to the encampment; he bade the young woman goodby and hastened away, leaving her with her lover.

Of course, this suited the two, and they remained there quite awhile talking.

At last Gertrude said she must be going or she would not get home in time to take luncheon with her father, and Arthur assisted her to mount.

When the goodbys had been said the girl rode away at a gallop, while Arthur walked toward his home.

When he got there he found that the majority of the Liberty Boys had returned to the encampment, and all were glad that Captain Fairfax had been captured, for they had taken a liking to Arthur, and were pleased to think that the danger that had menaced him had been removed.

As regarded Arthur himself, however, he was more pleased because of the fact that the danger that Gertrude might be abducted was now past.

The Liberty Boys put in the rest of the afternoon in rather a lazy fashion.

They lay around on their blankets and talked and told stories, and along toward evening they got to talking of the gold they had secured on their expedition up the Savannah River.

"What shall we do with the gold?" asked Bob Estabrook.

"That is what I have been wondering," said Mark Morrison.

"And I," from Sam Sanderson.

"I'll tell you what I think would be a good plan; boys," said Dick.

"Tell us, old man!"

"Yes, yes!"

Such were a few of the exclamations from the Liberty Boys.

"I think," said Dick, "that it would be a good plan to make General Washington a present of the gold, with the understanding that it is to be used to purchase arms, ammunition and provisions for the patriot soldiers."

"Say, that's a splendid scheme!"

"So it is!"

"Yes, yes!"

"Let's do that, boys!"

Such were some of the exclamations, and it was evident that the plan met with the favor of all.

"We could not make a better use of the gold," said Dick; "and I am glad that you favor the plan."

They discussed the matter quite awhile, and there were no dissenting words spoken; all were in for making this use of the gold.

"And after the war is over we can come down here and get some gold for our own use," said Bob.

"So we can," agreed Dick.

After supper was over that evening Dick told the youths to get to bed early.

"We will break camp in the morning," he said; "the British are to move out of Savannah and advance toward Charleston, you know, and we must keep close watch of them."

## CHAPTER X.

### IN CHARLESTON.

"Do you really think there'll be a battle, Dick?"

"Yes, Arthur; if the British advance to Charleston they will surely make an attempt to capture the city, and then there will be a battle."

"Say, let me go with you, Dick!"

"Do you want to take part in a battle?"

"Yes."

"Very well; you are welcome to accompany us; but what will your parents say about it?"

"Oh, they think I am old enough to take care of myself," with a smile.

"And how about Miss Gertrude?"

"Oh, she is the daughter of a soldier."

Dick smiled.

"I see," he said; "doubtless you think she will think more of you for doing some soldier work than for not doing it, eh?"

"Well, she won't think any less of me, at any rate."

"I guess you are right about that."

Arthur went to the house and told his parents that he was going to accompany the Liberty Boys, but that he would come back home as soon as the battle was fought.

His parents told him to go along; they were patriots, and were glad to have him fight for liberty and independence.

Presently the Liberty Boys mounted their horses and rode away.

They rode slowly, for there was no hurry; they were on horseback, while the British would travel on foot.

Dick and Bob rode down the road toward Savannah and took up their position on the top of a hill, and here they awaited the coming of the British army.

At last it put in an appearance, and then the youths rode back and rejoined the Liberty Boys.

The youths retired slowly before the British during the whole day, and when the enemy went into camp that evening the youths did so also.

"We will watch the British encampment," said Dick, "and if any foraging parties are sent out we will make an attack on them."

"Who will go and watch the British, Dick?" asked Bob Estabrook.

"I will do that myself."

He set out and was not long in reaching the vicinity of the encampment.

He was just in time. Two foraging parties were just starting out.

He watched till he saw in what directions the parties were going, and then hastened back to the Liberty Boys' encampment.

The British foraging parties each had about a dozen men in it, and so Dick sent two parties of twenty each of the Liberty Boys to get after the parties in question and capture them if possible.

Of course, he accompanied one of the parties and Bob had command of the other.

They parted at the edge of the open space in which the youths had their encampment and set out in the directions indicated by Dick.

An hour later the party Dick was with came upon the redcoats, who were engaged in the pleasing task of helping themselves to everything they cared for that was to be found in a patriot's home that they had come upon.

Dick did not delay an instant.

"Charge, Liberty Boys!" he said, in a low, grim voice; "give the rascals a volley when you are near enough."

The youths dashed forward.

When they were close enough they fired a volley.

This was the first intimation the redcoats had that danger threatened.

They had been so busily engaged in robbing the patriot's house that they had not been looking out for anything else. Nor had they placed out sentinels.

The volley dropped several of the British soldiers, and the rest were stricken with terror and fled at the top of their speed.

"After them!" cried Dick; "and give them a volley from your pistols."

The youths obeyed.

They ran after the fleeing redcoats with all their might.

They gained somewhat, and then they fired a pistol volley and dropped two more of the enemy.

The redcoats had got in among the trees now, and so Dick gave the command to cease the pursuit and return to the patriot's house.

This was done.

The family consisted of the man, his wife and three children, two boys and a girl. They had been terribly frightened, for they did not know but the redcoats would murder them, and they were profuse in their thanks to Dick and his comrades.

"No thanks are necessary," said Dick; "we are patriots, and it is our duty, as well as our pleasure, to strike the British blows whenever we can do so."

"We thank ye, jest ther same," said the man.

Then the youths went and looked at the redcoats who had fallen—five in number.

Three were dead and two were wounded. Both these were so bad hurt that they could not walk, and the youths carried them into the farmer's house and dressed their wounds.

Then they borrowed a spade and buried the three dead soldiers.

"Do you think the redcoats will come back?" asked one of the Liberty Boys.

"I hardly think so," said Dick. "However, we may as well stay here awhile and see."

So they remained an hour or more, but the redcoats did not come back.

The youths now bade the patriot family goodby and took their departure.

They got back to the encampment ahead of the other party of Liberty Boys, but it put in an appearance presently and the members were in good spirits. They had struck the other foraging party of redcoats a blow and had sent the enemy flying.

The next day and the next the Liberty Boys retired before the advancing British army, and then they rode into Charleston on the following morning, and Dick went at once to headquarters.

General Lincoln was glad to see Dick.

The Liberty Boys had been gone quite awhile, and he had begun to fear that they had met with some kind of a disaster.

"I have come to tell you that the British army is coming, General Lincoln," said Dick.

"Ah, indeed! When will it be here, Dick?"

"It will reach here, or this vicinity at least, this evening, sir."

"How strong a force have they, Dick?"

The youth told him, giving an approximate estimate.

"They outnumber us some, Dick."

"Yes, so they do; but we have the advantage of position and of being on the defensive."

"True."

General Lincoln summoned his orderly and told him to summon the members of the staff.

"We will hold a council at once," he said to Dick, "and will decide upon our course of action."

Within the hour all the members of the staff were in the room ready for the business of the hour.

They were somewhat excited when they were told that the British were coming, and the situation was discussed with great eagerness.

The majority, when they learned to what an extent the British army outranked their own in numbers, were of the opinion that it would be impossible to hold the city.

"They will beat us," said one.

"That is my opinion," from another.

Others said the same.

"If we could get reinforcements," said one; "we might be able to hold our own."

Just then there was a knock on the door.

"Come in," invited the general.

The door opened, revealing the orderly.

"What is it?" asked General Lincoln.

"A messenger, sir," was the reply.

"From where? From whom?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Show him in."

The orderly did so.

A soldier, dressed in a soiled and faded blue uniform, entered and bowed and saluted.

"Where do you come from?" asked the general.

"I come as a messenger from Count Pulaski, sir," was the reply.

"Ha! Say you so? Where is the count?"

"His army is encamped fifteen miles north of here, sir."

"How strong an army has he?"

"Three thousand troops."

Then the messenger drew a letter from his pocket and handed it to the general.

"From the count," he said.

General Lincoln opened the letter and read the contents.

"Count Pulaski is coming here to help us," he explained; "and now, if he can only get here with his army before the British arrive and make the attack we will be able to thrash the enemy soundly."

"They will reach here easily before evening," said the messenger; "they were breaking camp and getting ready to march when I left the encampment."

"They will get here in time," said Dick, "for the British army will not reach here before evening."

The messenger departed to get something to eat, and the officers discussed the new phase of the situation with considerable satisfaction.

"The arrival of Count Pulaski with his army makes it possible for us to offer battle with the advantage in our favor," said General Lincoln.

The others acquiesced in this statement.

Then they laid their plans for making the defense, and when this had been done they dispersed to get to work.

It was a busy day in Charleston.

The soldiers were at work throwing up earthworks and strengthening the defenses, and the officers were superintending the work and seeing to it that all necessary arrangements were made for the battle which it was thought must take place.

The citizens of the city were excited.

They did not know what to do.

They feared that if they remained in the city they might be killed, yet they disliked to leave their homes and flee.

Finally they figured it out that, as the battle would be fought at the south edge of the city, they would be safe if they retired to the north edge, and so the majority who lived at the south edge and near the center of the city made their way over into the northern part in the afternoon.

Count Pulaski and his army arrived in Charleston about the middle of the afternoon and were given a cordial reception.

The count went at once to headquarters and reported to General Lincoln.

The two talked quite awhile and discussed the situation

carefully. They were confident that they could give the British a thrashing.

They went out together and made a tour of the defenses.

Everything seemed to be in satisfactory condition.

About an hour before sundown the British army put in an appearance.

It went into camp half a mile away, but the patriots opened fire with the cannon and the British retired to a safe distance.

"That means that they do not intend to begin the battle this evening," said General Lincoln.

"You are right," agreed Count Pulaski; "well, that is satisfactory to us if it is to them."

"So it is. We will be ready, no matter when they begin."

The Liberty Boys had hoped that the battle would take place immediately.

When the British withdrew they were disappointed.

"There is to be no fight to-night," said Dick.

"So it seems," from Bob Estabrook; "I wish that they had come at us, instead of retreating."

"So do I," from Mark Morrison.

"Yah, I vos vish dot mineselluf," said Carl Gookenspieler.

"Yis yez do!" said Patsy Brannigan, sarcastically; "yez know thot yez are not afther loikin' to foight, Cooky-spiller, so phwat is dhe use av your talkin' loike thot?"

"I do lige do fighd, shoost so much as vat you lige id," was the retort; "und uf you don'd vos t'ink so, I vill fighd mit yourselluf, und brove id."

"Oh, g'wan wid yez, Cookyspieler; yez can't foight."

"I am afrait uf yourselluf; dot is vat ails me, und dot is so!"

The youths roared at this, and Carl, thinking he had said something funny and bright, laughed also, and was good-natured in a moment.

"I only hope that the British won't back out altogether," said Bob Estabrook.

"Why would they do so?" asked Mark Morrison.

"They might do so, if they were to learn that we have received reinforcements."

"I guess they won't find it out," said Dick.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BRITISH BECOME ALARMED.

General Prevost, the commander of the British army of the South at that time, did not like the way the patriots had greeted his appearance.

He had supposed that the rebels would wait till attacked before doing any fighting, and that they would refrain from firing in the hope that a battle might be avoided. But in so thinking he had made a mistake and had been forced to retire out of range of the patriot cannon.

He fell to thinking of the matter, and the idea struck him that it was possible that the patriot army was stronger than had been supposed.

"In that case we will need to be careful," he told himself; "they have the advantage of position, and if it should happen that they have anywhere near so many men as we have they might give us a hard fight."

He thought awhile and then summoned his orderly and told him to send "Sly" Saul to him at once.

The orderly bowed and went in search of the man in question.

"Sly" Saul Sparks was a Tory, who had lived in the South all his life, and who was all that his nickname implied; he was as sly as any redskin that ever stole through the wilderness, and he had been with Prevost some time acting in the capacity of guide, scout and hunter—he furnishing the army with wild game.

The orderly soon returned, accompanied by a tall, gaunt, leathery-faced man of perhaps forty years. This was Sly Saul.

"Ye sent fur me, gin'ral?" the man asked.

"Yes, Saul; I have some work for you."

"Whut is ther work?"

"I want that you shall enter the city yonder to-night and find out how many men the rebels have there, if such a thing is possible."

"I'll do my best, gin'ral," said Saul.

"Good! That is all anyone can do."

Sly Saul went away and waited till it was as dark as it would be, after which he left the encampment and made his way toward the city.

He took it slow and easy, and succeeded in slipping through the lines of the sentinels and entering the city.

He moved around without attracting any attention, and so keen and shrewd was he that he managed to learn that the patriot army had received reinforcements; he kept on working till he had learned the number, approximately, of patriot soldiers that were in the city, and then he started to go back to the British encampment.

It happened that Bob Estabrook had overheard Sly Saul making inquiries, and his suspicions were aroused.

He followed the man and kept close watch on him. He listened to everything Saul said, and by the time the Tory spy had finished his work and was making his way toward the edge of the city, Bob was convinced that the fellow was a spy.

"I will capture him," said the youth to himself.

He hastened after the spy, and when he was close enough he leaped forward and seized the fellow.

Bob was strong and agile, and thought that he would be able to handle the man easily, but in this he was mistaken. Sly Saul was very strong, and was as tough and wiry as a hickory stick.

He grappled with Bob and the struggle became fierce at once.

"Give up!" said Bob; "I have you, you Tory spy! You can't get away."

"We'll see erbout thet," was the reply; "ye hain't got me, by enny meens."

Bob found that the fellow had told the truth.

The affair was far from being settled.

The struggle went on fiercely.

Bob began to gradually get the advantage, and he felt certain that he would presently succeed in overpowering his opponent; but suddenly his heel caught against the curbing at the edge of the sidewalk and he fell over backward at full length.

He attempted to hold onto his opponent, but the fellow managed to jerk loose, and before Bob could get on his feet, Sly Saul was quite a distance away and running at the top of his speed.

The struggle had taken place on a residence street, and no one had happened to come along, so there had been no witnesses.

Bob was angry and disgusted.

He had expected to take the fellow to headquarters in triumph, and here the spy was about to make his escape.

"But I'll get him yet!" thought the youth, and, setting his teeth grimly, he raced after the fugitive.

He found that, good runner though he was, the fugitive was still better. Then, too, the streets were dark, and this gave the supposed spy a chance to dodge and double, and finally he managed to shake Bob off entirely.

When the youth realized that he had lost track of the fellow he was disgusted indeed.

"Oh, I wish somebody was here to kick me!" he exclaimed aloud.

But nobody was there and he was forced to do without being kicked.

He made his way back to the quarters occupied by the Liberty Boys and reported the matter to Dick.

"You made a mistake in not getting help," said Dick.

"I guess I did, old fellow."

"Yes; by not doing so he has escaped and will carry whatever information he has secured back to the British commander."

"I would have captured him if I hadn't tripped against the curbing and fallen."

"Yes, but you tripped and he got away. Well, it can't be helped now."

"No! Say, kick me, Dick!"

Dick laughed.

"Oh, you feel badly enough as it is," he said; "we will leave the kicking out."

"I vill mage you some kiegness, Pop, uf you vos vant me to do dot," said Carl Gookenspieler, who was accommodating always, as well as practical.

"Go way wid yez, Cookyspieler," said Patsy Brannigan; "it's mesilf wull kick yez av yez don't look out."

"Shut up, you two!" said Bob, and then to Dick he added:

"Do you suppose that the sentinels will capture the fellow?"

The youth shook his head.

"I don't think so," he said; "he is undoubtedly a slippery customer, and will get back through the lines as easily as he got through them coming in."

Dick was right about this. Sly Saul did get back through the line of sentinels without being discovered, and when he arrived at the British encampment he went straight to General Prevost's tent.

"Well?" said the officer, eagerly.

"They've got more men'n, whut ye hey, gin'ral," said Saul.

"They have?"

"Yas."

"How many have they?"

The spy told him, approximately.

General Prevost knit his brows and frowned.

"You must be mistaken, Saul," he said.

"W'y so, gin'ral?"

"There can't be that many men in Charleston."

"But thar air—'nless ther rebels whut I talked with lied erbout et."

"I don't understand how that can be the case."

"I know how et happens, gin'ral."

"How?"

"Ther rebels wuz reinforced ter-day."

"Is that so?"

"Yas; er feller whut they called Count Perlaskey, er sumthin' like thet, come inter ther city ter-day with three thousan' sojers."

"Ha! That explains the matter!"

General Prevost did not know what to think about the matter.

He did not like it at all.

Had he got there before the reinforcements arrived he would not have hesitated to make the attack in the morning, but now he did not know what to do.

He called his staff officers into the tent and placed the matter before them.

They did not like the looks of things any better than their commander did.

"In my opinion it will be folly for us to make an attack," said one.

"Yes, I think it would be suicidal," from another.

"If you want my opinion, it is this: That we may count ourselves lucky if we get away from here without sustaining considerable damage," said a third.

They discussed the matter quite awhile, and at last came to the conclusion that it would be safest and wisest for them to beat a retreat in the morning.

It was galling to the pride of General Prevost, but he was a level-headed man, and knew when to be bold and when not, and so the decision was made.

Next morning the patriots waited for the British to advance to the attack, but the enemy did not appear.

"What does it mean?" asked General Lincoln.

"Perhaps they have learned that we have a stronger force than their own," said one of the officers, "and have decided not to make an attack."

Dick Slater had told the general about the presence of the supposed spy in the city the evening before, and the officer at once concurred in this view of the other.

He at once told Dick to go on a scouting expedition and see what the British were doing.

Dick set out at once.

He hastened to the edge of the timber after getting out of the city proper and then made his way along, watching closely.

He came to where the British had been encamped the night before, but no sign of the enemy was to be seen.

Dick hastened onward, and from the top of a hill half a mile distant he got a good view of the British army.

It was moving steadily along toward the south.

"Yes, they are going back," he said to himself; "they have learned that we have a stronger force than their own and are not going to make an attack. I will hasten back and inform General Lincoln of the fact, and then doubtless he will go in pursuit. I hope so, at any rate!"

Turning, he hastened back in the direction of Charleston.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CHASING THE BRITISH.

"You say the British are going away, Dick?"

"Yes, General Lincoln."

"Going back toward Savannah, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"I was afraid that was the case. They learned that we had received reinforcements, and did not fancy making an attack when the chances were that they would get the worst of it."

"I think you are right, sir."

General Lincoln and Dick Slater were in the former's private room at headquarters.

Dick had just returned from his scouting expedition and had reported the fact that the British were marching away.

General Lincoln called a council, and it was quickly decided that the thing to do was to go in pursuit of the enemy.

The order was sent out and the soldiers began making preparations to break camp.

As soon as all were ready the patriot army marched out of Charleston and away toward the south.

The order was to march on the double-quick.

It would be necessary to do this if the British were to be overtaken, for they had a pretty good start.

The army marched onward till noon and stopped half an hour to eat dinner and rest.

Then the march was resumed and was kept up till nearly evening, when a halt was called.

The scouts that had been sent out ahead reported that the British army had stopped and taken up its position on the top of a hill a mile away.

"Do you think they know that we are pursuing them?" asked General Lincoln.

"I think so, sir," replied Dick Slater, who was one of the scouts.

"Then it must be their intention to make a stand and offer battle."

"Yes, sir."

"They have a strong position?"

"Very strong."

"No matter; we have a much stronger force, and that will more than equalize things, so we will make an attack on them."

He summoned his staff officers, and the matter of whether the attack should be made that evening or not came up.

It was decided, after considerable discussion, to put off making the attack until the next day.

"To-night," said the general, "we will surround the position occupied by the enemy and then in the morning we will make an attack."

This was thought to be the best plan, and so it was acted upon.

They stopped and ate supper and went into camp temporarily.

As soon as it was dark, however, the movement to surround the enemy was begun.

This required several hours in the completion, but it was accomplished at last, and then the soldiers lay down and went to sleep.

They were up before daylight next morning.

The majority of the patriot soldiers were eager for the battle.

Especially was this the case with the Liberty Boys.

They were never so happy as when getting ready to go into a battle.

They were young and full of life, and moreover they were strong patriots and were eager to strike a blow for the great cause whenever the opportunity presented itself.

While they were eating breakfast they were talking of the coming battle.

"I'm glad it is to take place this morning," said Bob Estabrook; "I have been waiting for a battle to take place a long time, and I am beginning to be impatient."

"Yah, und I vos peen glat mineselluf," said Carl Gookenspieler.

"It's meself wull scrame wid deloight whin Oi hear dhe muskits a-poppin' an' dhe cannon a-roarin' wanst more," said Patsy Brannigan.

"Yah, dose peen vat I lige," said Carl.

The others expressed themselves as being well pleased, and when the order came to get ready to advance they were prompt to do so.

Presently the battle began.

The patriots had no artillery, but the redcoats had several small cannon, and they opened fire with these.

The patriots could not reply, for they were not yet within musket-shot distance of the enemy.

They kept on advancing, however, and when at last they were close enough they opened fire.

The battle was now on!

The rattle and roar of the musketry was something terrible to listen to, but so well protected were the soldiers of both armies that not a great deal of damage was done. The British had thrown up earthworks and the patriots were sheltered by trees.

The battle continued an hour or more, and then the patriots retired and the officers held a council.

They had not made much headway.

It was decided to make one more attack, however; the second one might be more successful than the first had been.

So another attack was made, much to the delight of the Liberty Boys.

This time the fight was kept up an hour and a half, at least.

The position occupied by the British was too strong, however; it was impossible to get at them in a manner to do them harm of a serious nature.

Again the patriots drew off, and again a council was held.

One of the officers suggested that an attempt be made to hold a siege and starve the British, and this was given serious consideration, but the plan was finally given up as being impractical.

The only thing to do, therefore, was to return to Charleston.

The order was given, and the army began making its way slowly back in the direction of Charleston.

All save the Liberty Boys:

They did not wish to return, and Dick had asked permission to remain in the vicinity of the British.

"We will follow the army on its march back to Savannah," he said, "and will be on the lookout for foraging parties. We will strike a blow whenever and wherever possible."

This pleased the youths immensely.

They were sorry the battle had not turned out to be a victory for the patriots, but as that could not be helped they dismissed the matter from their minds and centered their thoughts on the work before them.

Dick sent scouts out ahead to keep watch of the enemy and to report if any foraging parties were sent out by the British.

About the middle of the afternoon one of the scouts came to Dick with the information that a foraging party had left the main force of the British.

Dick at once sent a force twice as large in the direction taken by the foraging party.

"Put a stop to their work, Dick," said Bob, as Dick and his Liberty Boys rode away.

Bob was left behind to command the main part of the force of Liberty Boys.

Dick and the youths rode in the direction taken by the redcoat foraging party.

An hour and a half later they came upon the party in question.

It was just beginning the work of helping itself to a lot of provisions, etc., belonging to a patriot settler.

The Liberty Boys appeared suddenly and opened fire, however, and the redcoats, after firing a scattering volley, retreated, leaving two of their comrades lying dead on the ground.

One or two more were wounded, but not so seriously as to make it impossible for them to get away.

The youths remained there an hour waiting to see if the redcoats would return. While waiting they buried two dead soldiers.

One of the Liberty Boys was wounded, but not seriously.

The British soldiers did not return, and so the Liberty Boys, after being thanked heartily by the settler, mounted their horses and rode away.

They rejoined the main force of Liberty Boys half an hour later and continued onward in the wake of the British army.

When the foraging party returned to the main army empty-handed and reported that it had been attacked by a party of rebels and two of its number had been shot down, the British commander was very angry.

"I will send a force out to search for the rascally rebels and capture them!" said General Prevost.

He at once gave the order, and a captain, with one hundred soldiers, turned back to attend to this matter.

It happened that one of the Liberty Boys' scouts caught sight of this party and hastened back and informed Dick of the fact that it was coming.

The youths at once made preparations to give it a warm reception.

They led their horses back into the timber and tied them to trees; then they went back and took up their position behind trees and awaited the coming of the enemy.

They did not have very long to wait.

The redcoats put in an appearance presently and Dick gave the command to take aim.

The youths leveled their muskets.

Nearer and nearer the redcoats came.

Presently they were nearly opposite the youths, and then Dick gave utterance to a shrill whistle.

This was the signal to fire.

The youths pulled trigger.

Crash! Roar!

The volley rang out loudly, and following it sounded yells, screams and groans.

The redcoats were so close that the Liberty Boys had been enabled to do good execution.

At least twenty of the redcoats went down, dead and wounded.

The British captain was a brave man, however, and he ordered his men to fire a volley in return. They did so, but it did not do much damage. The youths were protected behind the trees.

"Charge the rebels!" roared the captain, waving his sword.

The British soldiers started to charge into the timber, but the Liberty Boys fired two pistol volleys in quick succession, and this was more than the redcoats could stand; they whirled and ran away at the top of their speed.

The captain yelled at them and commanded them to return and stand their ground, but they would not listen to him. They kept on running.

"Well, we whipped them!" cried Bob Estabrook, in delight.

"Yah, ve haf licked der retgoats," said Carl Gookenspieler.

"Shure an' it's moighty litttle yez did, Cookyspieler," said Patsy Brannigan.

"I haf didded shoost so much as vat you have didded, Batsy Prannigan," was the reply, in a belligerent voice.

The youths now went out and looked over the field; they found that they had killed twenty of the redcoats and had wounded thirteen.

While they were taking note thus a British soldier came up the road bearing a flag of truce. He said the captain wished to be permitted to come back and bury the dead and take care of the wounded, and Dick told the messenger to return to the captain and tell him to come along, that he and his men should not be molested.

The redcoats soon put in an appearance, and after dressing the wounds of the wounded men as best they could they buried the dead soldiers. Then they made hammock-ambulances of their blankets and carried the wounded men away.

The Liberty Boys went into camp not far from the spot where the encounter had taken place, and next day they followed the British as they had been doing before.

They kept this up till the vicinity of Savannah was reached, and then they stopped. They went into camp near the home of Arthur Welby, whose parents were delighted to see him back safe and sound.

When they asked him how he liked being a soldier he said that he liked it first rate, and that he had made up his mind to stay with the Liberty Boys till the end of the war.

Dick told him that he would be glad to have him become a member of the company, and so it was decided.

The next day Arthur rode down the road toward Savannah and managed to meet Gertrude. Of course both were delighted, and when Arthur told his sweetheart that he was going to become a member of the company of Liberty Boys she did not object.

"I am glad that you are willing to help fight for your country," she said.

"And when the war is over we will be married, sweetheart," he said.

"Yes, Arthur."

And they were married at the end of the war. Colonel Amesly did not like the idea of his daughter marrying an American, but he saw that his daughter loved the young man devotedly and realized that it would be folly to with-

hold his consent, so he gave it. As he would have nothing to draw him back to England, now that his daughter was to remain in America, he resigned from the British army and remained behind when the army went back.

Captain Fairfax, the traitor-deserter, was shot the day after he was handed over to the British by Dick Slater and Arthur Welby.

After the war ended Dick Slater and a large number of the Liberty Boys went down into Georgia and made their way to the place where they had found the gold. They were fortunate enough to run across Red Fox, and he was glad to see them, and did all he could to aid them in securing the gold.

They secured enough to make each and every one of them independent for life.

THE END.

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